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DECEMBER 1984

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Global Trends in Music Fashion Politics

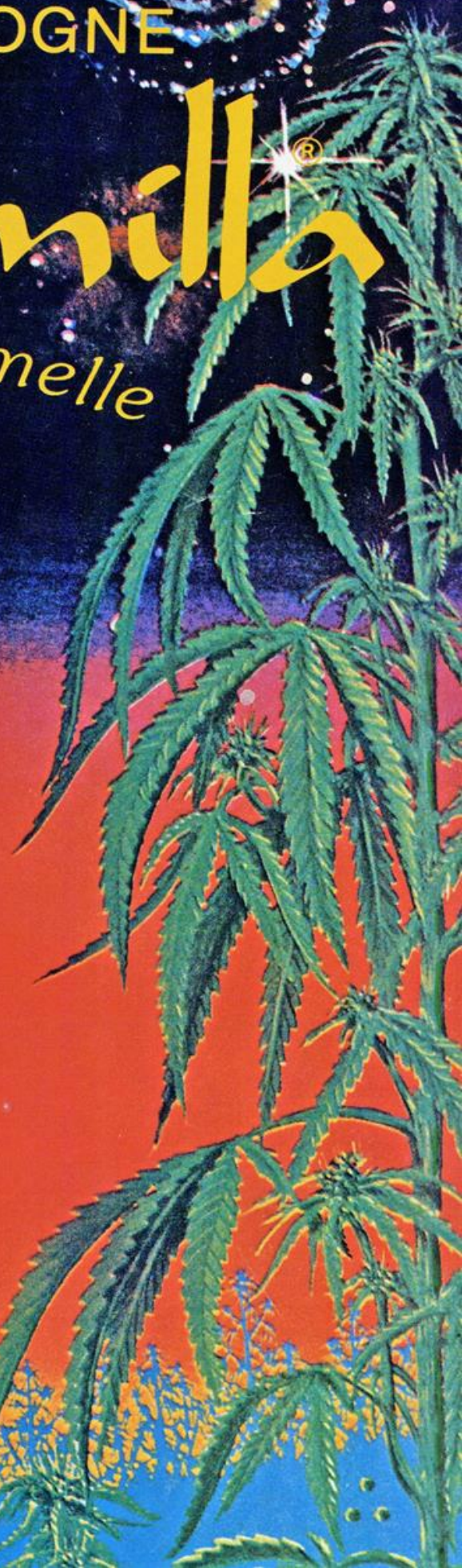


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de la fleur femelle

Paris



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Parfum • Cologne **Sinsemilla** was inspired by the highly psychoactive fragrance of the illicit virgin female Cannabis Indica marijuana flower.

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Sinsemilla Parfums and Cosmetics, concept and design by Don Alton Herrington.

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HIGH TIMES

No. 112

December '84

FEATURES

To Be My Other Self by Tom Starr

Barhopping behind the Berlin Wall, our reporter finds good times, Levis and punk music don't stop at the East German border. But don't enjoy yourself too much or the Stasi will brand you *asozial* and banish you to the provinces . . . 32

Barcelona Boogie by William Levy

"It's the *numero uno* city in Europe," reports our resident scamp abroad. Under Franco, Barcelona, along with all things Catalanian, was anathema. With the restoration of democracy came the rebirth of the city and the fiercely independent spirit of its inhabitants . . . 38

Tokyo-A-Go-Go by Jeff Spurrier, photos by Ann Summa

"Imagine that at some time in the future the earth became uninhabitable and people from all over the world were sent to space stations. You would then have a situation where culture and habits of every country would be broken down and reconstructed into a culture that was acceptable to all that was assembled there. What the Japanese are doing at the moment is somewhat similar to that."—Ryuichi Sakamoto . . . 44

Centerfold . . . And a Happy New Year . . . 50

Outlaws in Babylon, Part II by Steve Chapple

Last year marijuana was this nation's fourth largest cash crop. But converting a field of this particular brand of produce into legal tender is a far sight more complicated—and risky—than hauling your turnips and tomatoes to market . . . 56

Wrong in the Past by Lynne Tillman

Winging her way along the cusp of western civilization our heroine finds herself in Istanbul during Ramadan, the holiest Moslem holiday. Danger, excitement and the muezzin's cry fill the air. The streets are filled with pilgrims, poets, pickpockets plus two would-be American smugglers . . . 62

Interview: Northern California Grower by Joe Delicado

Having harvested successful marijuana crops for the past five years in the hills of northern California, the subject of this month's interview is an expert on the vicissitudes of growing pot under pressure . . . 66

HIGH TIMES Christmas Gift Guide

Copping for Christmas threatening to dampen your holiday spirit? Not to worry. We've put together a bunch of goodies from coca tea to a solar-powered refrigerator . . . 90

HIGHWITNESS NEWS

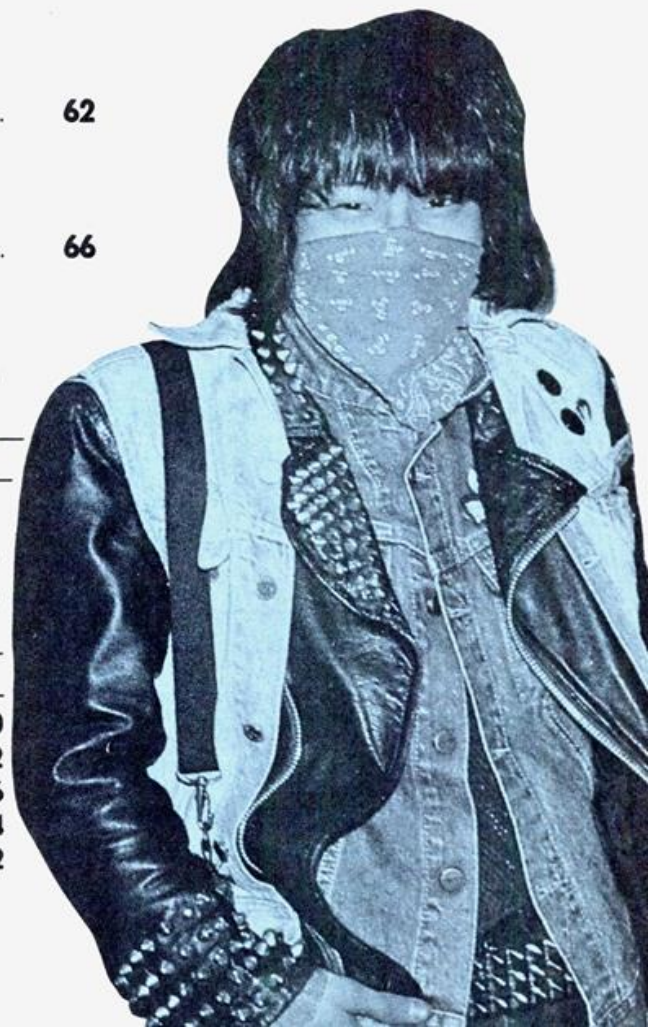
During the past year, over 85,000 persons in the state of Oregon petitioned to have a marijuana initiative placed on their November ballot. Did they ever get the chance? Democracy was never so exhausting . . . 19

Trans-High Market Quotations . . . 29

DEPARTMENTS

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Cover: Photo by Ann Summa

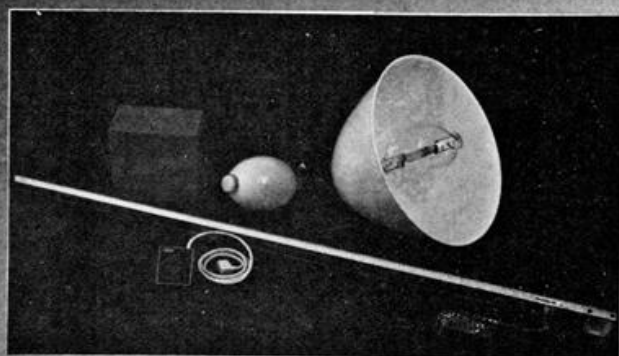


IT MOVES!

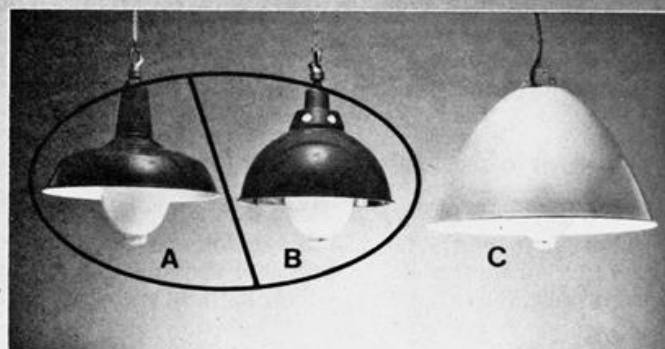
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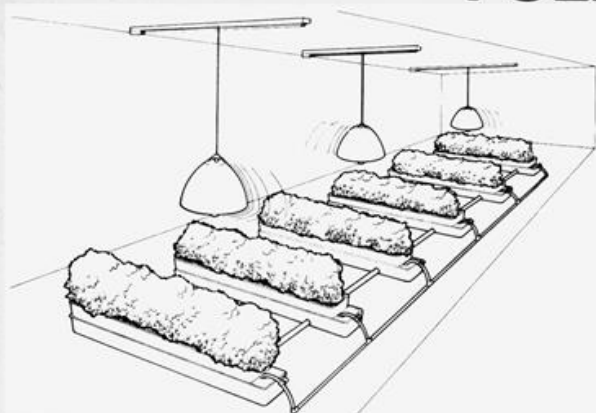
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Whoop for Coop

Editor:

Hooray for Steve Cooper's Secret Scrapbooks [HIGH TIMES, July '84]. Being on the scene for the past ten years has obviously afforded him anecdotes and photographs enough to fill a small library. He's one of the most amusing raconteurs I've ever had the pleasure of reading and his pix are consistently top drawer. More stuff from him would be welcome.

—S. Roberts

Boston, Mass.

Potentially Vegetarian

Editor:

Good for you! Running an article about the physiological and psychological effects of a vegetarian diet in your September issue. (You people keep this up and your reputation as a stoned dope rag may be in jeopardy.) Some of Rosen's facts were truly staggering. Being a confirmed meat-eater myself, I can only shake my head over how I'm continuing to screw up my body. Well, maybe one of these days I'll give the veggies a shot. I've already stopped smoking... cigarettes, that is.

—Steve Meir

Los Angeles, Calif.

The Special Agent Speaks

Editor:

Your September symposium featuring Special Agent Ron D'Ulisse of the Drug Enforcement Administration was pretty good... and scary. His arguments for the use of entrapment and snooping techniques by the government to get dope busts hopefully will be severely maimed by the recent jury decision in the De Lorean case. Good idea printing what he had to say, though, know your enemy and all that. Keep up the good work.

—Tom

the Midwest

Blessings on His Head

Editor:

After all the shouting and screaming regarding "R"'s recent pronouncements about running, prayer, etc.—what a pleasure it was to sit back and once again read a column devoted to what "R" does best:

describe and differentiate the effects of good pot. After all is said and done, there is really no one like him in the whole world. Sure, sometimes we may disagree, even get pissed off at some of the things he says. So what. That's what makes him so goddamn interesting and provocative. Would you rather have some stoned moron saying that everything was far out and outta site? So here's to "R"—God bless him and may he live and smoke and write for another hundred years.

—Name and address withheld

High on Holy Men

Editor:

Your September issue just came in and wow! Ira Cohen's coverage of the gathering of Hindu holy men in India was something to take your breath away. Talk about heavy spiritual shit. Those sabus were some of the most absolutely gooned-out dudes I've ever seen, and I lived in a welfare hotel in New York City for three years. Actually, as freaky as they looked, Cohen's accompanying text made their trip under-



standable, even to someone who doesn't like Indian food.

—Michael Keating

Address withheld

That's sadhus, Michael. Hindu holy men are called sadhus, not sabus.

Thanks for the thought, though.—Ed.

Where Are We Going?

Editor:

What, may I ask, is the goal of your publication? I recall the optimism of your earliest issues; the high-minded idealism that would discourage abuse and promote practical attitudes regarding substance use. Have I misinterpreted? If not, have your goals changed?

I've just read your September issue. The cover story was excellent.

Mr. Rosen had great responses for all the questions so often asked about vegetarianism. But how come the "Sinse San'wich"? I can't see any reference to drug use in the article.

Dr. Tim Leary, who was interviewed in your magazine last year, has been promoting healthy attitudes towards illicit and experimental drug use for twenty years. He makes a derogatory comment in a rival mag and you childishly try to get even. His comment was edited so as to appear senseless, and then the caption. To call Tim a narc 'cause he called you one!! I grew up a couple of miles away from Tim's Millbrook, New York, home and attended yoga classes there. Never did he tell me to buy synthetic drugs and sell them as real, as 50 percent of your advertisers do. Those are "beat drugs" and the people who sell them are called "rip-offs." Get it?

As for Ira Cohen's pictorial: he should sell his stuff in porno shops to the social deviates who buy "after" pictures of automobile wrecks. You've made these devoted seekers of light into a laughable group of fanatics. This is most likely an editorial blunder, because I won't believe that Mr. Cohen, having researched his topic, could think these sadhus and yogis as silly as was conveyed.

Chas. Bukowski is a creative and moving author, but the way in which you excerpted "Margaret's Dream," it contained no character development or continuity (but a little sex and plenty of violence), and it did little to further your cause or Mr. Bukowski's career.

The Dylan article was very good. Complete, personal, informative,

/ continued on next page

LETTERS

/ continued from previous page
and written to hold my interest
throughout. Of course, it was much
played down on your cover and
table of contents.

So you buried one good article
(Dylan), chopped another to shreds
(Bukowski); made vegetarians (as
myself for eighteen years) seem to
advocate drug use (I do, but I'm
sure Mr. Rosen doesn't); then poked
fun at yogis and (horror of horrors)
Dr. Timothy Leary!! So, I ask again,
where are you going? What are
your goals?

—C.P. Harris
Tucson, Ariz.

In the Right Direction

Editor:

Just wanted to let you know I have
noticed the difference in the last
four issues and greatly appreciate
being able to read every ad and
article again. It's true that there
exist plenty of people writing about
higher consciousness, as well as
plenty willing to learn about it. It
warms one to see you dealing with
today's world in a positive manner
rather than turning away behind

arrogance or sarcasm. I will have to
resubscribe if you keep it up! Ads
for phone sex was the worst. People
really need that? Amazing.

Some comments you may find
interesting from an issue-one reader:
I've always enjoyed "R" the most—
a great writer. And I agree with
him on indica (big deal). But where
I feel the brother is straying is that
no grass is good enough anymore.
So really there is nothing to say, if
we accept that. If the only pot is a
"Phantom Ounce," why bother to
mention it? Better to comment on
what is around on a relative basis,
rather than something nonexistent.
As it stands, the column is not very
useful for the consumer (as it once
was). It's mostly "R" 's personal
diary—so what? I live, too. (No
belittlement intended to his life.)

Only other thing, really, is I'm
glad you quit making fun of your
letter writers. Letters are one small
aspect of a person—you have all
made mistakes in print. Example:
you labeled Amanita as Psilocybe
in HighWitness News one time. So
what—if I see the difference, it is
enough. I need not persecute
anyone.

So—keep on working, man. We
need you.

—David Seed
N.C.

Deal of a Lifetime

Editor:

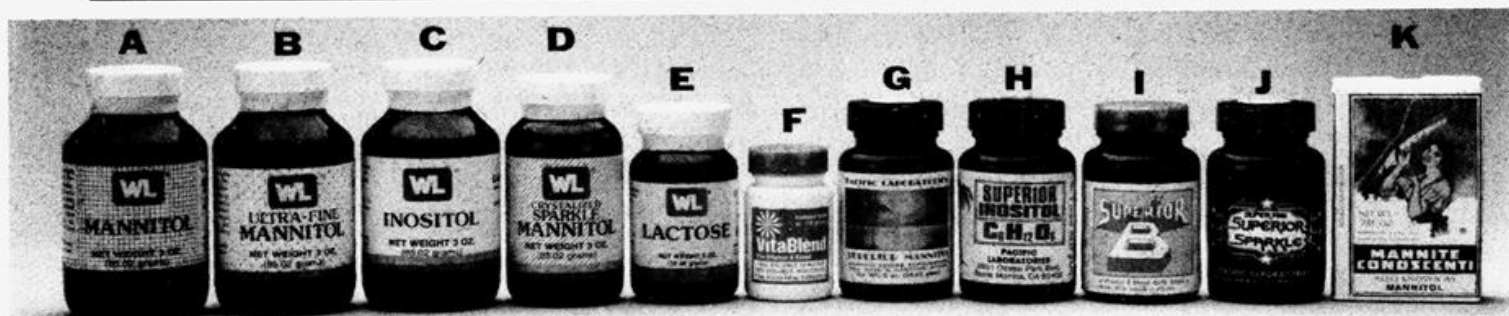
We got this in the mail. Interesting,
huh? And we thought coke was
illegal.

—Critters Unltd., Boutique



We neglected to credit Mark Mathew
Braunstein for the last two para-
graphs in our September feature,
"Give Peas a Chance." The para-
graphs were excerpted from his book,
Radical Vegetarianism: A Dialectic

/ continued on page 14



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Top-Drawer's T-shirts: Simply Shocking

Everyone has seen "Keep On Truckin'," one of the country's most ubiquitous (and ripped-off) designs—on patches, mugs, bumper stickers, truck mudflaps, and in a hundred unlikely places. It's become part of the "Overground" world.

But maybe you're one of those who fondly remember Mr. Natural and Flakey Foont exchanging cosmic insults, Fritz the Cat slipping his paw down his feline girlfriend's dress, or White-man being carried off to the woods by his abominable snowgirl, or a thousand other images from *Zap* and other underground comix of the '60s, all done by the Michelangelo of Comix—R. Crumb.

But whatever your cultural orientation, you're going to find it hard to resist the new, official R. Crumb T-shirts available from

Top-Drawer, a group of creative types with underground comix connections.

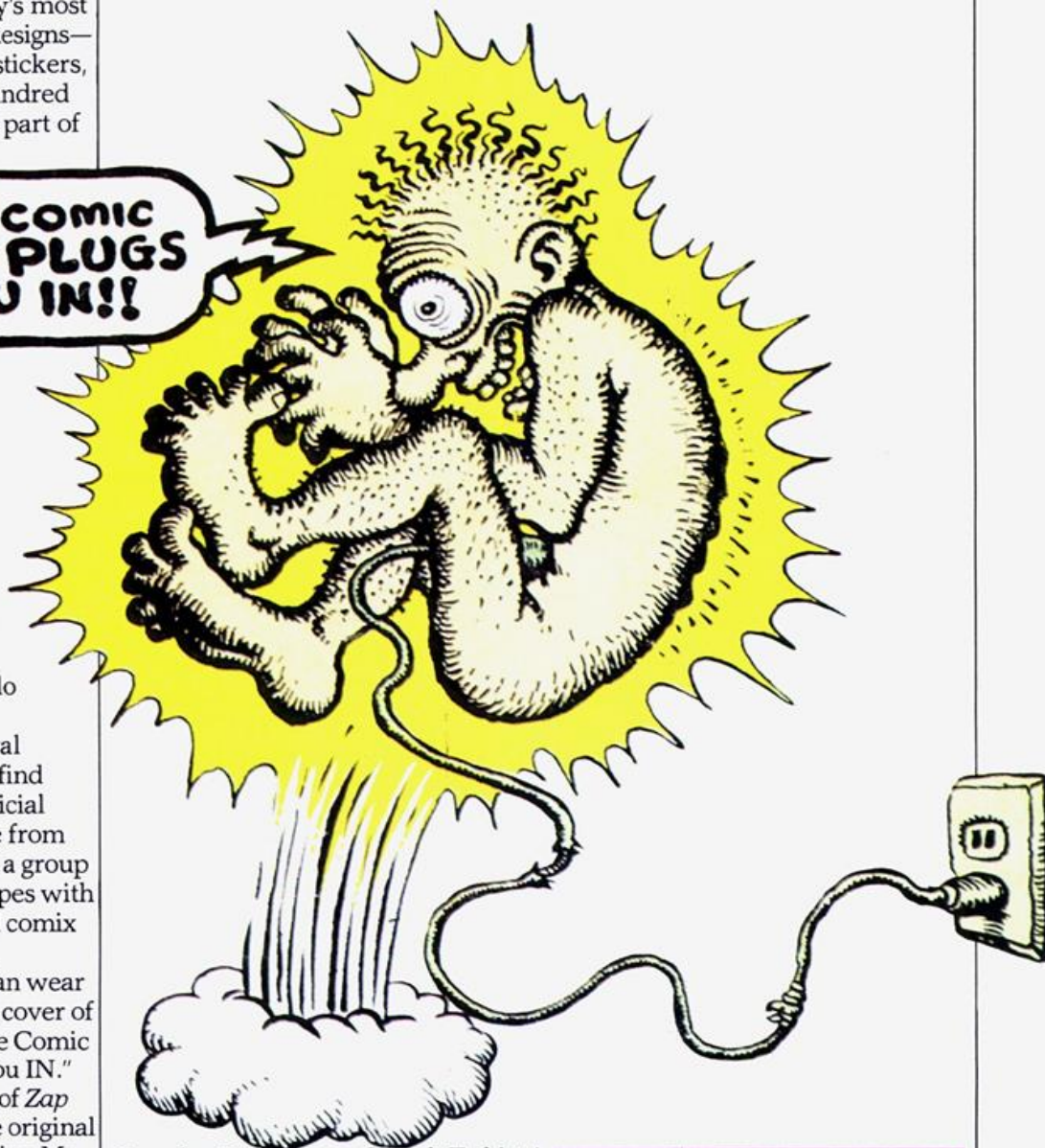
Now you can wear the full-color cover of *Zap* #0—"The Comic That Plugs You IN." Or the cover of *Zap* #1, also in the original colors, featuring Mr. Natural giving his own inimitable brand of advice to a baffled

little old lady. And, in red, white and blue for you patriotic types, there's "Help Build A Better America—Get Stoned."

Also available, in black and white (and all from the master): "Stoned Agin," "The Whole Universe Is Completely Insane," "Fritz the Cat" and "Times Are Tough, Huh, Bud?"

The company also specializes in an exclusive line of Crumb and underground comix rubber stamps. You can cover your rolling papers with Crumb's incredible imagery as you proudly wear your 'Get Stoned' T-shirt. There's even a bonus

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All T-shirts are white, 100% cotton, and are available in small, medium, large and extra-large for \$9.95 postpaid (including free stamp). For a FREE brochure write to: Top-Drawer Tease, P.O. Box 38, Hancock, VT 05748.

Available also from Top-Drawer is a Robert Crumb sketchbook containing unpublished work from the master cartoonist. For more information, write to Top-Drawer.

Coming next month

A color comix extravaganza. The premiere installment of **Funny Papers**, featuring the hottest young cartoonists in the nation. Plus: **Madonna**, **Lou Reed** and the founding fathers of Psychedelia.

FLASHES

Cannabis Patch Prisoners: No More Mr. Nice Doll

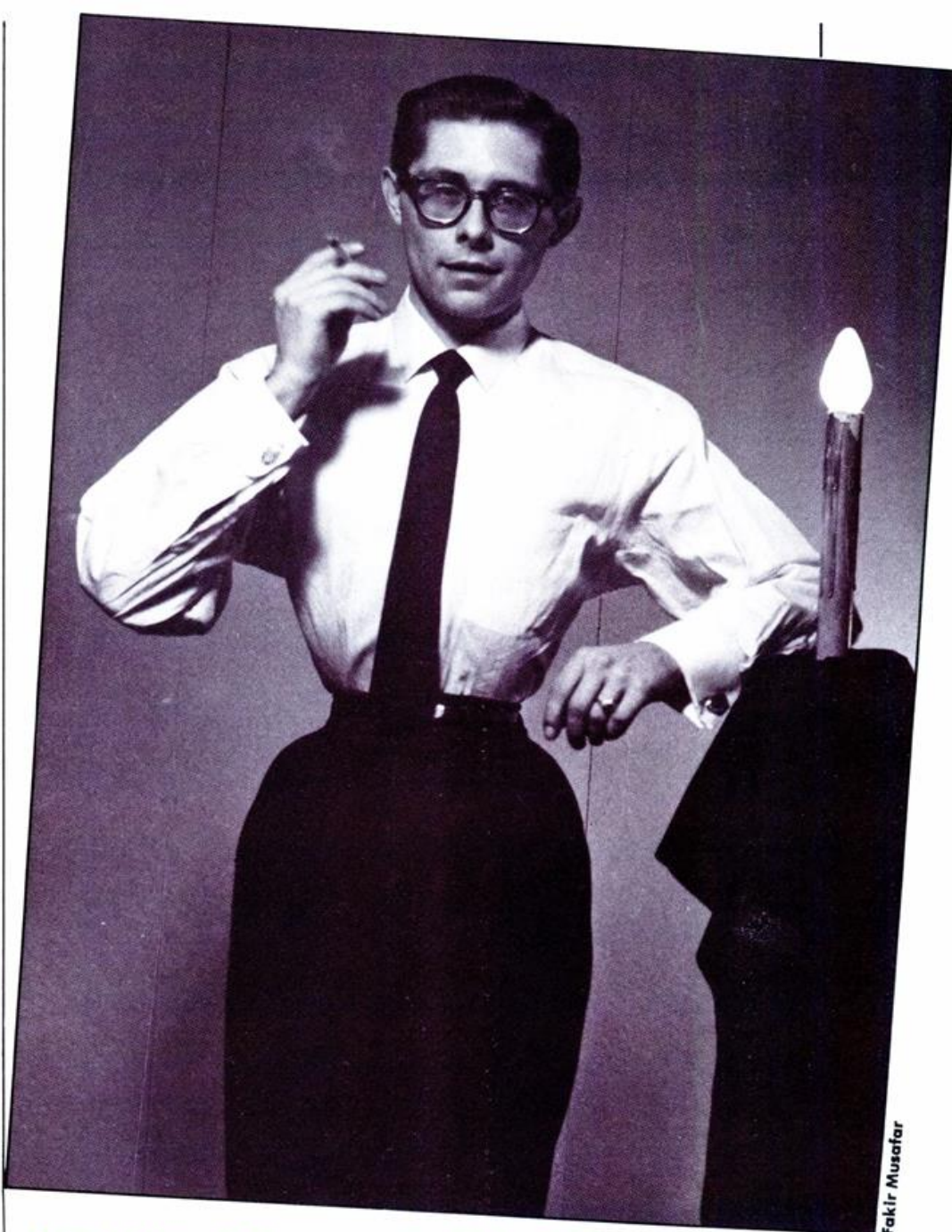


Cannabis Patch Prisoners are dolls that just aren't nice. They've got tattoos, beards, mugshots and prison records. To get one of these pint-sized toughs you have to bail them out. Prisoners currently awaiting release are Rolling Rollo, Hittin' Helen, Tokin' Tommy, Puffin' Paco and Blown Away Billy. For an additional \$15, though, you can name and number your own furry little ex-con. For more information, contact the Warden at Cabbage Patch Prison: P.O. Box 149, 3862 East Bay Drive, Largo, FL 33541.



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Fakir Musafar

A Brief Word from our Articles Editor:

● "I should like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to all my friends, readers and colleagues at HIGH TIMES Magazine. For the last four years I've worked hard at making HIGH TIMES the most provocative and exciting magazine on the newsstands. I can only hope that to this end you've found at least some of my efforts successful. Now, I'm leaving this magazine to move on to other challenging areas in the field of communications. Goodbye and good luck."—George Barkin

HIGH TIMES Quote of the Month

**"Drugs are a serious problem.
But Communism is a greater problem."**

—Sam Billbrough, Drug Enforcement Administration

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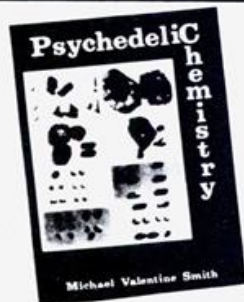
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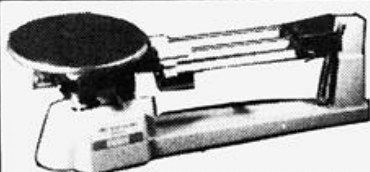
• Assistant Art Director Santiago Cohen (his real name) journeyed back home to Mexico recently to spend some time with his family and friends. One of the highlights of the trip was the chance to sit in with his favorite hardcore wrestling and mariachi band, Los Empenadas ("The Empenadas"). That's our muchacho second from left.



Hey Ugly

• That's the notorious voyeur du cinema Ugly George trying to hustle an unsuspecting young thing out of her clothes, and into his soon to be released movie, Inside Girl's (pronounced "Goils") School. "If the ditchweed doesn't set 'em free," says the Ugly Man, "I talk about how I'm personally acquainted with the editorial staff of HIGH TIMES. After that they're putty in my hands." Disgusting.

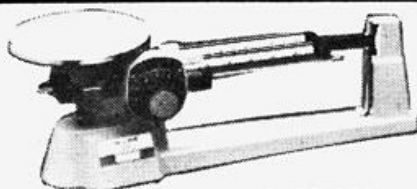
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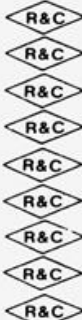
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/ continued from page 8

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Editor:

To be honest, I don't buy your magazine much—in fact, I don't buy it at all—but I have a question which I feel you are probably best suited to help me with. I heard on a radio call-in show that marijuana has been successfully used to treat patients suffering from glaucoma. Is this true? Also, do they know why such treatment works, and if it indeed does, why isn't it more readily available?

—Susan J.

Akron, Ohio

Sure it works. Something in marijuana smoke—most likely the delta-9 THC, though not necessarily the delta-9 alone—inhibits the production in the body of many classes of prostaglandin hormones, including one called "arachnoidic acid." In persons with glaucoma, abnormal production of arachnoidic acid causes chronic aggravation of eyeball-fluid pressure; it happens in episodic spasms, during which the patient's vision becomes milky and cloudy in the periphery. As time goes on, and the fluid pressure increases over years, the retina is gradually destroyed and eventually vision is lost forever. By inhibiting the production of arachnoidic acid, though, the active principles in marijuana smoke can alleviate these onsets of cloudy vision, reduce eyeball pressure and retard the progress of the disease for years.

Marijuana is not a cure for glaucoma. There is no cure for glaucoma at all, though there do exist several patented medicines that work like marijuana to retard the progress of the disease. Many of these medications have uncomfortable side effects which get more uncomfortable as time goes on, and appear to lose their efficacy with time, so that the dose has to be increased, and the side effects get worse. Marijuana, by helping to keep the dose of these other medications down, can prolong their effectiveness for years, and thus keep the patient from going blind that much sooner. The only side effect seen with marijuana is the high, and the high very quickly ceases to affect

/ continued on page 16

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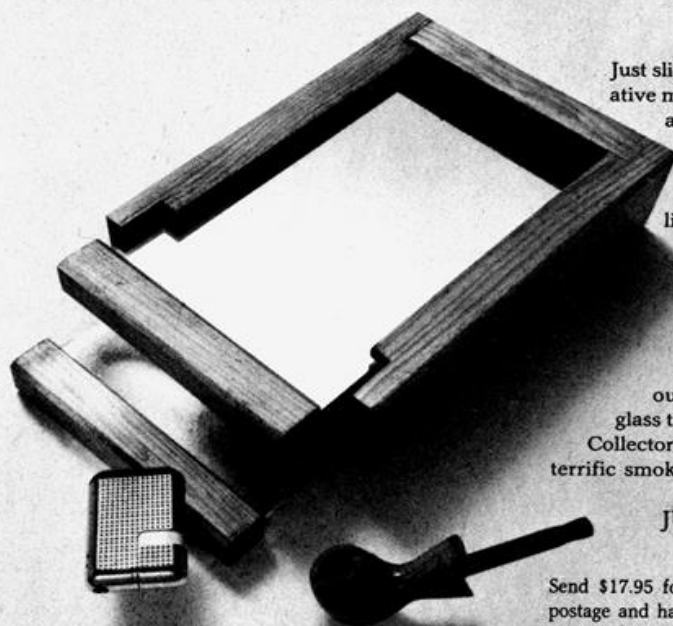
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/ continued from page 14

patients in any way after they get accustomed to smoking more than three or four gram-sized marijuana cigarettes per day.

The reason marijuana's so difficult for patients to get hold of legally has to do with the politics of bigotry. A bill was introduced to Congress three years ago by Massachusetts Republican representative Stewart McKinney which would change the legal classification of marijuana slightly, making it possible for doctors to prescribe it for glaucoma (and for cancer-chemotherapy patients) with no more red tape than any other prescription drug. Although the change in classification would make marijuana no more "legal" than cocaine is in law, a coalition of "parents groups"—spearheaded by DeKalb Families in Action of Georgia, whose chairperson, Sue Rusche, writes a syndicated newspaper "health" column on dope issues—mounted a sustained opposition to it. The DeKalb organizers hysterically characterize McKinney's bill as a plot by well-heeled marijuana growers and international narcotics movers (who, they insinuate, have bought this arch-conservative Republican politico) to legalize pot and force it down the throats of sick people and small children. Incredibly, although absolutely no one on either side of the issue is in any doubt about the real nature of McKinney's bill—and the incredible venality of these right-wing parents groups—no one in Congress would dare support this measure. Any politician who did so would be crucified by the right wing. And that's why, three years now since this bill was introduced, marijuana is still virtually impossible for glaucoma patients to get hold of. Someday, someone will make a count of all the people who went blind while these parents played their insipid power games and all these Congresspeople played it safe.

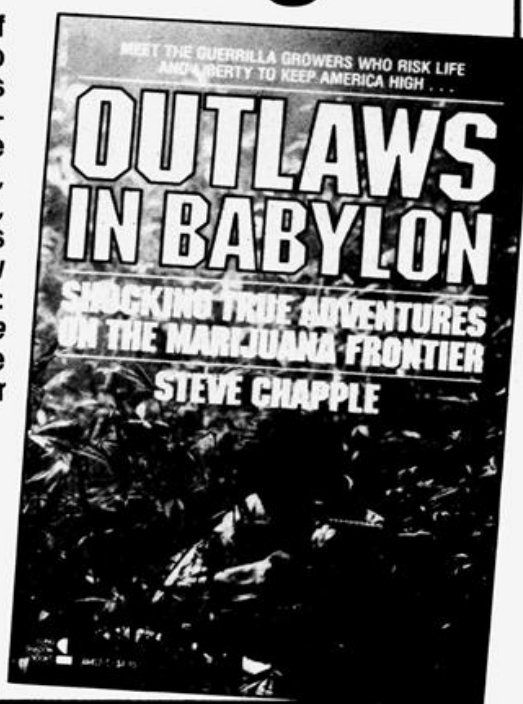
If you want a more respectable source for this sort of information, try Marijuana as Medicine, by Dr. Roger A. Roffman, Madrona Publishers, Seattle, 1981. Or write or call Bob Randall at the Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics, at 709 8th St. E., Apt. A, Washington, D.C. 20003, (202) 483-8595. But don't tell them we told you to get hold of them. Every time we tell the truth about this business it makes more trouble for them.—Ed.

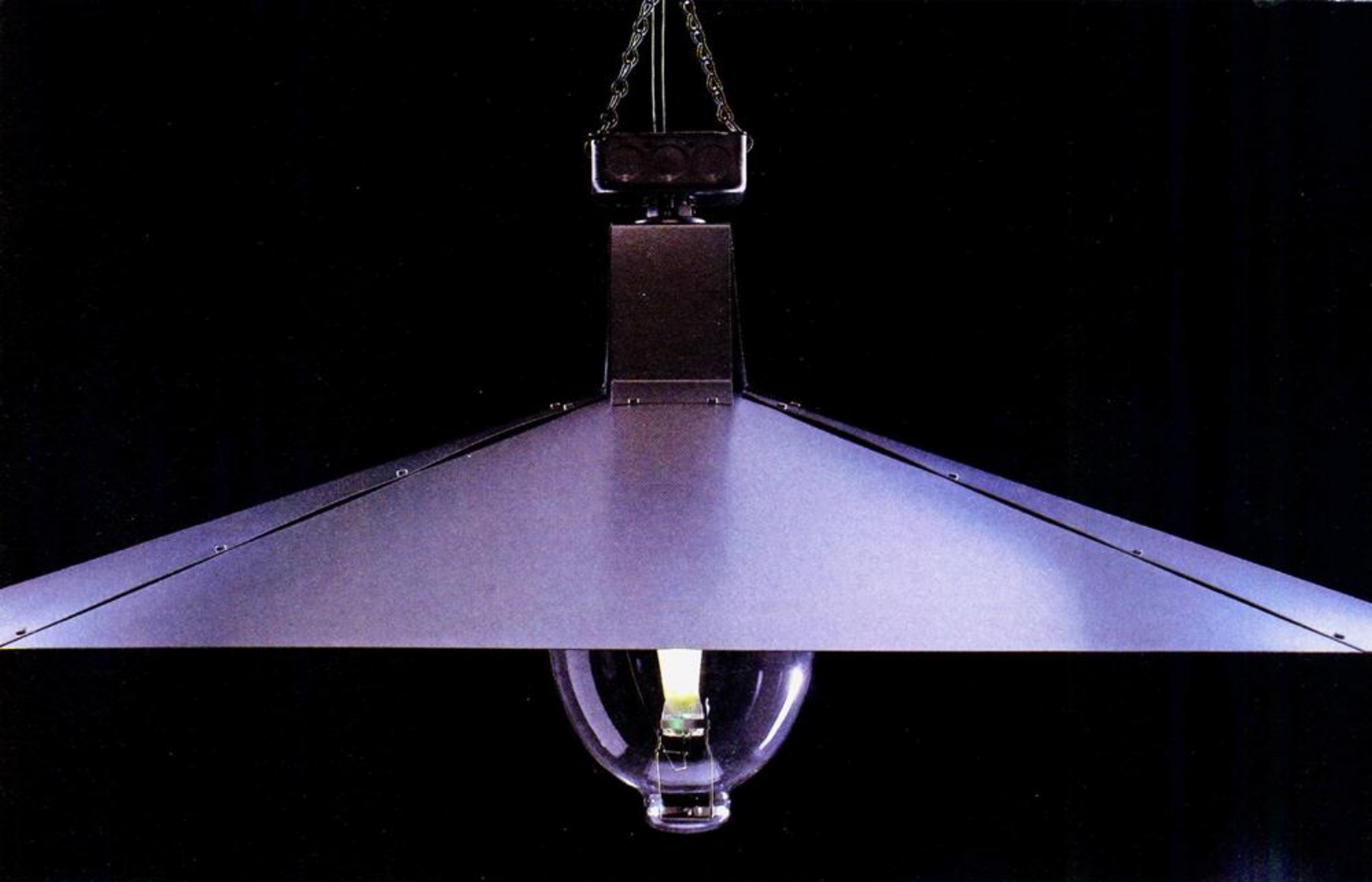
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OREGON MARIJUANA BALLOT TORPEDOED BY POLITICOS

DECRIM PROPOSAL MAKES BALLOT, THEN
IS YANKED BACK OFF BY PANICKED OFFICIALS

by Dean Latimer

E U G E N E, O R E G O N

OREGON GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY RICHARD Gary looked up at the panel of six appeals court judges from his papers on the defense desk in the Salem courtroom, and said: "Your honors, you must understand that there is opposition to this initiative that has not been heard."

Chief Oregon appeals judge John Roberts became intensely interested. "What do you mean?" he asked quickly. "Can you name this opposition?"

Gary was a little startled. "I don't know the names or the organizations," he fudged. "I only know that there are people who want to see the initiative defeated."

"Fine," said Judge Roberts. "When it gets to the ballot in November, they'll have a chance to vote against it."

There was plenty of opposition to the Oregon Marijuana Initiative over the year it took to get the question on the state ballot. Unlike the people who worked to put it on the ballot, however, no one in opposition to this initiative had the decency to identify themselves publicly. This was only practical for them, though, since it may not be exactly *legal* to work to physically thwart the placing of a question on an election ballot. Although it's perfectly legal to conspire to place an initiative question on a ballot—even if the question involves relaxing the laws against personal marijuana cultivation and use—concerted activity *against* posing initiative questions may imply obstruction of justice. The legal rules governing



Deborah Oerther

OMI victorious in Salem—"for all of two hours."

the placing of election-ballot initiatives are in a continuous state of flux and evolution, and so the progress of the Oregon Marijuana Initiative through the magic year 1984 produced no end of novel developments. Win or lose, the OMI experience provided a uniquely educational dissection of the electoral process; it also succeeded in sniffing out its unnamed opposition, identifying the professional "antidrug establishment," how it works and why it exists. It turned out to have absolutely nothing to do with drugs.

The OMI process itself was efficient enough. After years of squabbling among professional leftnik agitators, self-interested pot dealers and headshop distributors, charismatic media messiahs and such other disagreeable rabble, the core leadership of the Oregon Marijuana Initiative Inc. was ultimately pared down to a handful of absolutely honest and deadly serious people, mainly local community organizers in widely scattered towns and cities around the state. Under the general coordination of a flagrantly clean-cut young Portland lawyer named John Sajo, over a series of conferences at pleasant wilderness retreats along the Columbia river, they settled on the sparest possible proposal: to eliminate legal penalties against the "personal, private" possession of pot, and cultivation for personal use. Since this would do no favors at all for well-heeled pot dealers or headshop owners, the always

registered to vote, for the first time, specifically so as to be able to sign the OMI petition: a respectable chunk of the overall vote in Oregon. In June, the OMI people put on a Herculean burst of overkill, and on July 6 they presented exactly 85,003 signatures to the state courthouse in Salem, with a party on the building's dignified marble portico that filled the whole day with music, kids, dogs, balloons, banners and euphoric pot-smoke. Nobody came down for nearly a week, when the secretary of state advised Sajo by phone that no, the Oregon Marijuana Initiative was not going to be on the November ballot after all. And so there.

A Most Popular Petition

All this was not achieved without a lot of hooplah and chicanery. The *OMI Newsletter* appeared from time to time, depending on the state of the little outfit's finances, and presented some swell laid-back oratory. The advantages of pot legalization? "For one thing, thousands of people will avoid the degrading experience of being arrested for marijuana each year. Relations between police and the people will improve noticeably. Think how nice it will be, and how much more effective law enforcement will be, when we can all be more friendly with police, and not have to worry about being possibly arrested for marijuana." This was the consistent tenor of OMI's lobbying: laid-back, sweetly spoken patty cake. It never got more flaming radical than John Sajo's suggestive equation: "Trying to deal with drug problems by arresting and jailing adults for their quiet enjoyment of marijuana is a violation of peace, just like financing guerrilla war in Nicaragua is."

The lefty rhetoric was purposely kept to a minimum, in the interests of eliciting the sober attention of the *real* targets of marijuana law-enforcement in the state: the unemployed, who tend to be deeply suspicious of do-gooder leftish malarkey and to cherish the general idea of police antinarcotics activity, in the ludicrous style of the television cop shows they devour. "Police would have us believe that Oregon's marijuana growers are part of some malicious organized-crime effort," OMI was very clear in stating. "In reality, Oregon's marijuana growers are mostly the rural poor, who grow a few marijuana plants to keep off food stamps. And for this they face the wrath of the United States military, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and state and local police."

In Oregon—alone, maybe, of all the 50 states—this simple statement was recognized, far and wide, as the undeniable truth. The state governor, Vic Atiyeh, is an ardent Reaganaut, as is his attorney general, Dave "1984" Frohnmayer. Since 1981 and the Reagan Revolution, accordingly, the law-enforcement establishment in Oregon has been ambitiously pioneering bold new concepts in police administration, exploring every possible way to extend police control

"The state just wants to nickle-and-dime us off the scene."

slender sources of OMI's finances deliquesced even further. But what they now had was a clear, simple question of immediate interest to anyone in any way concerned about marijuana: *should* the law be changed this way, and do you feel qualified to vote on it, one way or the other, in November?

The petition-signing period commenced on June 7, 1983, and the deadline for filing the petition forms with the state election board in Salem was July 6, 1984. A total of precisely 62,521 valid petition signatures, showing the true names and addresses of registered Oregon voters, was required to place the question on the November ballot. The OMI petitioners, working shopping plazas and neighborhood fairs in every one of the state's 31 counties, passed the minimum requirement in mid-spring. No fewer than 40,000 people went and got themselves



John Sajo: flagrantly clean-cut.

over individual behavior. The narcotics laws are ideal for this, of course, and especially the marijuana laws, since so many otherwise law-abiding folks do smoke, grow, buy and sell pot.

The "Rent-A-Narc" project of 1981 was the first really dramatic endeavor in this line. A small number of professional "confidential informants," thugs certified by the state narcotics bureau to be experienced and effective dope snitches, hired themselves out to county sheriff's departments, moving from town to town throughout Oregon, entrapping wholesale bunches of people into petty pot "delivery" offenses. This project, carried out under the unofficial supervision of the Justice Department in Washington, was designed simply to test the effectiveness of traditional police-state tactics in America. If police agents are allowed to get away with this sort of deception and entrapment, then eventually—it is expected—no prudent person will ever entertain any thought of committing a crime suggested by another person, for fear that the person suggesting it is some sort of undercover agent or freelance informant.

The star of the "Rent-A-Snitch" program, as it turned out, was a handsome young sharpie named Mark Caven. For the sheriffs of Wasco, Douglas, Umatilla and Union counties, Caven set himself up as the proprietor of a phony employment agency, running ads in the local papers for long-term, security-guaranteed jobs with a nonexistent construction company. Industry in Oregon

being perpetually depressed, Caven got to interview hundreds of people at each location, in his wired-up "employment" offices. Each time, Caven would guarantee the poor sucker that he had a job for him, f'r shurr, but as a personal tip for this lifetime opportunity, Caven would like a little marijuana; otherwise the job would go to someone else who *had* some marijuana.

Fortunately for civil rights in America, Mark Caven also had a weakness for pretty young women. He hit up so many secretarial aspirants for blowjobs (when they couldn't furnish any pot), that women everywhere began to compare notes on him. The upshot, after a whole lot of press publicity, was that every single one of Caven's scores of busts was overturned in court as errant entrapment, and the budget managers of all those depressed Oregon counties are still trying to figure out how to pay off all the five-figure individual damage settlements their sheriffs incurred by hiring Mark Caven. (See "The Sinsemilla Snitches," HIGH TIMES, February 1982.)

So everyone in the state of Oregon knows that the police there are systematically gunning for innocent people, endeavoring to entrap them into "drug crimes," so as to terrorize people away from petty crime in general; especially people who might be tempted from time to time, by the vicissitudes of chronic unemployment, to make a brief, quick dollar on marijuana. This probably accounts for how astonishingly easy it was for OMI to clock up 26,000 extra signatures on their petition to change the marijuana laws.



Deborah Oerther

True families: the Oerthers and Burbank.



Pot freaks and death-penalty freaks vied for parking space.

A Muted Opposition

Another development engineered by the Reaganauts in the state government of Oregon has been the creation of sundry "public-interest" organizing committees. One of these, which purports to represent the interests of an association of "former district attorneys" in the state, was integral to the quick and unchallenged placement of three other initiatives on the November ballot. Two of these initiatives call for the reinstatement of the death penalty for miscellaneous criminal offenses, and the other is called a "victims' rights" bill, which essentially would allow the state's cops to ignore such impediments as Miranda warnings, search warrants, due process, bail and so on, out of consideration for the rights of hypothetical crime victims.

Besides this shadowy phalange of "ex-district attorneys," the Reaganauts also made a heroic effort to set up a variety of "concerned parents groups" to hysterically exploit the perpetual drug issue. In Portland, a corporation called Oregon Free From Drug Abuse (OFFDA) was chartered, with a core membership of self-described "parents" which was even scantier than OMI's core membership, and which has not notably increased over the years. OFFDA has, however, been the sole recipient of all the federal "drug education and prevention" money that the Reaganauts in the Washington ACTION funding office have been pleased to disburse. What they do with the money—distribute antidrug comic books, and such-like lifesaving activities—is not evidently a matter of much importance, so long as nobody else gets their hands on that "drug" money. OFFDA's chairperson, a woman named Sally Smith with a very good record

for political fundraising, holds an official position budgeted at \$18,000 per year.

It was during the 1983-1984 initiative-petitioning season that OFFDA inadvertently declared its genuine function, insofar as it functions as anything beyond a money-catching facility. OMI petitioners everywhere discovered themselves, especially in public shopping centers, to be in competition of a sort with petitioners for the death bills and the "victims' rights" question. These people very often complained to the owners of the parking lots about these "drug people" infesting the premises, and indignantly demanded their removal. Eventually it was necessary for a Multnomah county court judge to specifically affirm that OMI petitioners had as much valid right to be on public property as anyone else. And in the process of working all this out, it was discovered that the very people petitioning for these certified ultra-right-wing initiatives were exactly the same individuals making up OFFDA and its various subsidiary acronyms throughout the state. These people were definitely not just plain old public-spirited moms and dads worried about their kids.

OFFDA in Portland itself stayed mainly mute about the OMI movement; they appear to have attorneys of their own. The head of their downstate "SODA" spinoff—Southern Oregon Drug Awareness, Inc.—waxed fairly vocal about it, though, early on. "The ramifications of using marijuana in this state now are enormous," declared Mary Will of SODA: "To legalize it would be a statement that it's okay, it's acceptable. We feel in no way is it acceptable."

Reporters asked Sheriff C.W. Smith of Jackson county if it were true that legalization of private pot cultivation, by robbing money from pot dealers, might make things

a little better. "That's poppycock," Sheriff Smith shot back. "It would make it a lot worse." Well, *how*, exactly? Shurf Smith thought a minute, and then told how once they've legalized marijuana, then they'll go on *next* to legalize coca for cocaine, opium poppies for heroin....

Obviously, then, opposition to this oddly sensible ballot proposition would be best restricted to righteous-sounding considerations of its alleged "message," without getting down to any treacherous specifics. So in Douglas county, far downstate—a particularly wretched place to look for regular work, and which had been singled out because of that in 1981 for a thorough going-over by Mark Caven—the county government contrived to broadcast its own alternative message in mid-April 1984. The Douglas county commissioners, meeting in secret council, declared a state of drug-emergency in Douglas and unilaterally put the Drug Enforcement Administration Model Drug Paraphernalia Act into permanent operation there. The target of this message, as everyone was perfectly aware, was a local woman named Diane Weiker.

Diane Weiker does not now, nor ever has, run a headshop. In late 1981, when the Mark Caven scandal broke, Diane Weiker of Roseburg started up an outfit called Balance, whose symbol was a pair of Libra justice scales, to mobilize local opposition to further such expensive misadventures in local law enforcement. For years the Weikers have been mainly involved with trying to make sure the county's numerous needy folk don't get entirely lost in the scramble for public funds; but ever since they came out in opposition to the sheriff's ruinous participation in Caven's "Rent-A-Snitch" program, their Balance outfit has been solidly designated as a "pro-pot" organization. And Diane Weiker has done nothing to blunt the accusation; by last April, in fact, she'd signed up every third fairgoer in Douglas for the Oregon Marijuana Initiative.

After this drug-emergency headshop measure was passed last April, of course Diane Weiker was the only person publicly to ask the county commissioners what sort of emergency portended. A local glut of headgear, maybe? "County officials say, to their knowledge, no local shop sells items that would be considered drug paraphernalia," noted the Roseburg *News-Review* reporter who covered the confrontation. He noted with some interest that the only "paraphernalia" on view anywhere was a collection of weird "toys," ostensibly designed for sale to tiny children as "power hitters," which were presented and enthusiastically demonstrated before the commissioners by Beverly Cagle, who operates the local OFFDA acronym, "Families United For Drug-Free Youth." Cagle tells HIGH TIMES she scored her paraphernalia—"a Fazer gun, a football and a Frisbee"—in Portland, 180 miles north.

Under Weiker's questioning, the commis-

sioners ultimately conceded that the "drug emergency" which they'd invoked was the forthcoming Drug Awareness Week. This was a national event promoted that month by the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth, the cryptoconservative "antidrug" organizing entity in Washington, which coordinates activities of statewide "parents" groups like OFFDA and their local acronyms. The National Federation was very big on promoting the DEA's novel headshop law everywhere just then: the famous edict prohibiting such deadly drug devices as "bowls, sifters, blenders, envelopes and balloons," and also publications (such as the one you are right now reading) which give directions on how to cut coke, or grow pot, or mount "promarijuana" initiatives or whatever. In view of the rather favorable local-media attention Diane Weiker and Balance had been getting, throughout the OMI petition drive, the political hacks of Douglas county had been scrupulous to send out an emergency message that they *personally* advocated whatever the Reaganauts' money people were advocating.

"What kind of message," Weiker asked scathingly, "does it send to our children when they see their elected officials secretly adopt an ordinance with an emergency clause? What is the *emergency*?" And she started talking about the Constitution, a theme that was handled quite briskly by the headshop bill's main sponsor, councilman Doug Robertson.

"Whether or not the ordinance is constitutional," quoth Robertson, "makes no sense to me. We don't care about that. What we care about is making a statement that we don't want those people here."

It was all in the *message*, agreed the head of the county's impoverished alcohol-and-drug treatment services, John Gardin. "I especially applaud the process," he emphasized. "I think a message can be lost by a process that can be weakened to the point where the message isn't clear to the citizens, and especially to the youth of our country." Due process in lawmaking, that is, is a luxury to be abandoned when times are tough for county social agencies dependent on public money.

As for "those people" who were personally unwelcome in Doug Robertson's county, it was obvious to everyone that Diane Weiker headed the list. The message was clearly tap-danced out with hob-nailed boots less than a month later, when she became the first person to be arrested under the new DEA headshop ordinance.

It was the Douglas County Fair, just outside the Roseburg city limits, and the Balance people had set up a table in the Grand Market area under the grandstand. They were set up catty-corner across from a booth of Survivalists, who were hawking assault bayonets, stash cans for the secret transport of explosives, cartridge-filling kits, old Special Services demolition manuals, and such

other wholesome, non-drug sorts of paraphernalia. At the Balance table the first evening, Diane Weiker was peddling OMI buttons, free-the-weed T-shirts, and copies of the grower's gazette, *Sinsemilla Tips*, which had been given her by its publisher, Tom Alexander up in Corvallis. "A man in a baseball cap came up, and bought a couple copies of *Sinsemilla Tips*, and went away," Diane recalls. "I didn't learn until the next day that he was Virgil Knight, the undercover narc who ran a string of entrapment operations around the Southerland area last year."

Virgil Knight came back the following day in his new Douglas county sheriff's uniform and handed Diane a summons for violating the new DEA-model headshop law. "I asked him if I was supposed to be under

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arrest," she recalls. "I mean, what was I supposed to do? I asked him. He looked around, and finally said that if I took the price tag off a pair of balance scales we were selling, it'd be okay. The scales were gem scales—you couldn't weigh anything heavier than *grams* with them—which someone had donated to us because they looked just like the Balance letterhead logo."

The next day, when she came in to be arraigned, Diane learned that she was being cited for the crime of offering *scales* for sale, in the general proximity of a magazine offering directions for "the manufacture of a controlled substance." The possible penalty was a \$500 fine. Go forth, she was told, and sin no more.

"A friend of mine is a jewelry artist, with a

booth at the fair," Diane Weiker tells HIGH TIMES. "She got really pissed, because right between us there was a man selling feathered roach clips. And she'd asked the cops why they didn't cite *him*, and they wouldn't answer. So she worked up some nice feathered clips of her own, and put them out for sale, and sure enough, she was cited the next day. But they dropped her charges as soon as the fair was over."

Douglas county sheriff Norm Neal, now that it's too late to do so with any dignity, may wish he'd dropped Diane Weiker's charges before it's all over with. The case was supposed to come up in county court last September, but after Shurf Neal learned that the Portland ACLU was working up a good landmark *amicus curiae* brief on Wei-

the secretary of state for the state of Oregon. It was she who wound up carrying the can for the antidrug establishment in the Salem capital, beginning with her call to John Sajo last August to advise him that no, OMI was not going to be on the November ballot after all. As Norma Paulus promptly went forth to tell the press, a check of the signatures on those 85,003 petition entries had shown too many of them to be "unverifiable." The two death propositions had zipped straight through, and so had the "victims' rights" initiative, but the press was given to understand that these marijuana people had scandalously padded their signature lists with Mickey Mouses and Tecumseh Shermans and so on.

And that's what the press understood, too, until the OMI people hired some East Coast attorneys to go over the secretary of state's checking procedures. In Oregon, these procedures call for a random selection of five percent of all the submitted signatures—5,157 of them, in this case—to be plucked out and inspected. If a certain percentage of these names can't be matched with their addresses and voter-registration numbers by the clerks of their respective counties, then the initiative doesn't get on the ballot. This is the perfect way to keep petitioners from larding their signature lists with Mickey Mouses and Tecumseh Shermans; and if the selection of names in this case had been *truly* random, things would have gone on much more pleasantly.

Unfortunately, whatever computer in Paulus' office selected signature lines for inspection was not programmed to do so randomly. No fewer than ten of the "lines" selected had no signatures in them at all, but were only blank lines or ballpoint-testing scribbles; blank lines are not selected randomly in a signature-checking process. Moreover, 34 more random names turned out to belong to people who'd been properly registered to vote when they signed the petition, but whose registration had lapsed before the July 6 filing deadline. Another 55 turned out to have changed their addresses after signing the petition, and were therefore not instantly trackable by the county clerks doing the verifications. Another 76 persons were disqualified for registering to vote *after* they'd signed with OMI. Finally, no fewer than 108 of all those signatures represented people who'd happened to be in a county other than their home county on the day they signed the petition sheet: a fact that would have been instantly recognizable to the people who selected these names from the raw petition sheets, if those selectors had been purposely looking for debatable signatures.

The Salem people who did the signature-selecting—that is, civil servants hired by all the taxpayers of Oregon—managed to lard their "random" selection here with a wholly improbable proportion of debatable signatures. If this was not an outright obstruction

of justice, then it was only a hairsbreadth short of it.

If this had been done to all those ferociously patriotic and trigger-happy souls who'd signed the death-penalty petitions, they would probably still be shooting it out with the Oregon state police. The OMI people, with their laid-back and ultratolerant image to perpetuate, put on their suits and ties and soberest knee-length dresses and went to court.

They did what the law provides for: went to the State Supreme Court with a 200-page Writ of Mandamus, asking the court to go over the secretary of state's entire rechecking process, and determine whether it was valid in itself and, if it was invalid, for the court then to direct a recount. The court, seeing a splendid opportunity to further clarify the murky rules governing initiative procedures, snapped the case right up—to the manifest horror of the Reaganauts in Salem.

For weeks afterward Norma Paulus was expressing her personal outrage that this court would even consider this particular issue. Richard Gary, her attorney before the six-judge appeals panel at the Salem trial in late August, first informed the judges that they had no business on the case at all. Gary's position was that the OMI plaintiffs here should have first taken the case to each one of the state's 31 circuit courts, where of course they would have been told to carry it up to the very Supreme Court Gary was already addressing; this process would have taken well into 1985, long past the election, which would have satisfied the Reaganauts perfectly. In fact, Gary told the judges, the law said that this is what *must* be done in these petition-challenge cases.

It was not the only point in his presentation that attorney Gary shaded the important term *should* into *must*. In speaking of all these signatures declared invalid simply because the signers were outside their home counties on the day they wrote them down—103 of these 5,157 names—Gary clearly and repeatedly told the judges that the law stipulates that people *must* sign petitions inside their home counties, or these petitions *will* be deemed invalid. He seemed unaware that among the six judges he was addressing was the very judge who had written that statute. Eventually, the judge picked up a copy of the line in question, had it read aloud, and testily inquired of Gary when the words "must" and "should" had become interchangeable. "He recoiled from the microphone," smiles Sandee Burbank of Mosier, head of Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse, who was on hand.

This trial was an event, needless to say. "I went in there still half-cynical, believing what everyone was saying, that it's all fixed, and it's stupid to try to use the system to change anything," Sandee Burbank said right after the hearing, before the decision was announced a week later. Sandee actually

"When did the word 'should' change to 'must,' counsellor?" the judge asked.

ker's behalf, the trial was postponed indefinitely. Shurf Neal, whose office hired supersnitch Mark Caven, already has 21 civil rights suits pending. Last spring, in desperation, Shurf Neal begged the National Guard to come into Douglas with guns and Hueys and paraquat, throw a "demonstration marijuana-eradication program" there, and take this dangerous pot-enforcement business out of his personal hands once and forever. The federal government never responded to this plea in any way at all. The Justice Department also has lawyers of its own (who have never, incidentally, proposed the marvellous DEA headshop bill for federal enactment, since they know perfectly well it's patently unconstitutional, and have said so in congressional testimony).

On Again, Off Again

Norma Paulus has the misfortune of being

is a concerned parent, with a houseful of kids of her own, and enough first-hand familiarity with real dopers to be very worried about all the outrageous lies those kids get fed in school every season, by people spending her tax money. "But I came out knowing we were doing it exactly right," she told HIGH TIMES last August. "I felt justice in that courtroom."

Deborah Oerther, OMI petition coordinator from Clackamas, leaving the courtroom with one of her legal consultants, asked how things looked now. "She said that our lawyers had done a very good job of talking for our side, and then their lawyers did a very good job of talking for our side."

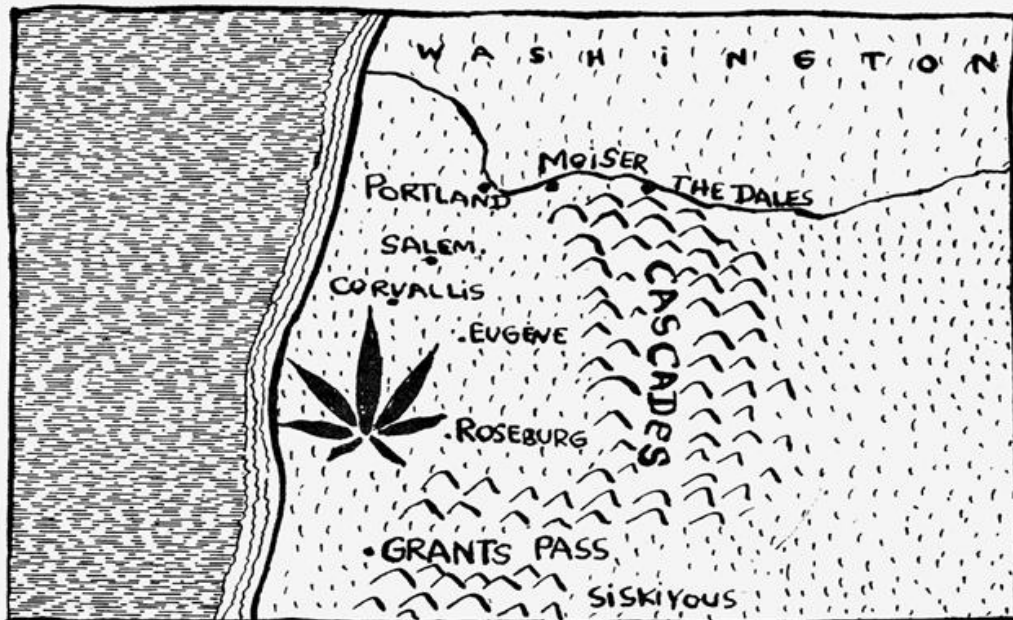
"I have no choice," Norma Paulus told the press a few days later, "but to place the Oregon Marijuana Initiative onto the November ballot." The State Supreme Court had directed a recount of those 5,157 signatures: the blank lines were not to be taken into account and should never have been taken into account—"This was improper," wrote the judges. All those people who'd signed out-of-county petitions, those who'd been purged from the registration rolls after they'd signed up, and those who'd changed their addresses were all to be counted as verified signatures: 207 signatures restored, out of 282 debatable signatures. The 75 who'd registered to vote only after signing the OMI petition were still unverifiable, the court deemed; initiative-petition drives are not voter-registration drives. Thus the Supreme Court of Oregon cleared up some delicate procedural questions about initiative processes in general, and only incidentally put OMI on the November ballot—for a little while.

"We were on the ballot all of two or three hours," Debbie Oerther recalls rather bitterly. "Norma Paulus was so blown away with the idea that we'd won in court, she went before the media that day in a confused

state and said she had to put us on the ballot, just because the Supreme Court had agreed with us that those signatures were verifiable." To Paulus' mitigation, it was evident to a Portland *Oregonian* scribe that she had come to the press conference fresh from a visit to the dentist that day. "She was being terrifically sweet to us all that day," said petitioning coordinator Lindsay Bradshaw. "She told us she'd personally been in favor of decriminalization for years, and she was glad it was all over, and we were solidly on the ballot at last." Was it pure politics, people wondered later, or just nitrous oxide?

Maybe it was Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer, more likely. After Paulus consulted with Frohnmayer that day, she came forth before the cameras the next day to apologize: no, she said, OMI was not going to go on the ballot after all. When reporters asked her why not, the response was unclear. Paulus said the Supreme Court had been the wrong venue for this question to be raised in, and then declared, "This evidence would have been inadmissible in any other court." Did she mean to indicate she was thinking of appealing the court's decision to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit? No answer, new question please. She said it was unfair for OMI to have "thirty days" to work up its clever arguments, while her office had had less than "twenty-four hours" to prepare its own side; and since none of the press hacks had bothered to read the judges' decision anyhow, no one asked about the judges' own statements that they'd been talking to those government lawyers weeks before the trial. Paulus did not do a terrific job of explaining precisely why OMI was off the ballot all of a sudden, and people began increasingly to suspect she was personally obstructing it.

"The office is using every possible little technical mistake to disenfranchise voters," OMI attorney Alan Silber of New York told



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the papers, drawing an angry personal denial from Norma Paulus. Actually, it was clearly attorney general Frohnmayer who was putting the blocks to OMI, using the hapless Paulus as his vocal instrument for it; Frohnmayer will be running in the Republican primary for governor against Paulus in 1985, and so some egg on her face does not inconvenience him at all. John Sajo of OMI avoided this infighting. "They just made a mistake," he was charitably telling the press all through this fracas.

So the opposition to OMI was focused, pared down to the officers of the state government. Every few days for weeks, some-

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- ☐ Yes
☐ No

one from the secretary of state's office would meet the press with a new alibi for keeping OMI off the ballot.

The Supreme Court, they pointed out to curious reporters as the days dragged on, had not directed them to automatically put OMI on the ballot, but to "proceed immediately to count and verify the sample of signatures submitted, correcting errors previously made." This they were doing, and it was taking a great deal of time. Meanwhile, the press might be interested to know that the attorney general's ace crime sleuths had turned up all sorts of flagrantly fraudulent signatures among the OMI petition sheets. Some joker in Washington county had, in fact, turned in a whole 20-line sheet full of the names of rock 'n' roll performers, and this sheet was regularly screen-projected for the benefit of the newshounds. The state police chief growled that OMI was "under investigation" because of this, or had been, or would be.

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thing had happened. The press, having rat-packed on poor Norma Paulus for her hapless flip-flopping, began quickly to feel a little guilty and uncertain. It necessarily goes against every sane and charitable person's instincts to believe that the top officers of a state government would conspire—in public—to thwart the electoral process. If the Salem administrators were dragging their heels like this in doing a proper recount of the OMI petition, then, by golly, doesn't it stand to reason that there must be something fishy about that petition? By the middle of September, although OMI's visciditudes were now making daily front-page play all across the state, the lead paragraphs tended to emphasize this business with the obviously bogus signatures that the cops had trotted out. The front-page byline reporters handling these stories did not very commonly understand—since the *previous* stories had been handled by other, lesser reporters—that the question of bogus signatures had been taken care of already, by the random-selection procedure.

"The point of this whole business is simply to nickel-and-dime us off the scene," Lindsay Bradshaw explained to *HIGH TIMES*. "We haven't got any money, but we do have a lot of bills." Debbie Oerther was expecting the phone company momentarily to come in and yank all the lines out of OMI headquarters. "If we get on the ballot, then we'll get contributions from political organizations. But every day we're off, we get closer to just going out of existence, and that's what Frohnmayer's counting on."

Certainly it was not the federally-financed parents' groups that were obstructing this process. A check with Sally Smith at OFFDA found her well-briefed with arguments against the OMI proposition, but scrupulously soft-spoken about them. "We oppose all aspects of marijuana, especially for children," she pledged. "Children," in a pinch, can be construed as "18-to-21-year-olds" in parents-group terminology, and of course those late-adolescent types would get legally-untrammelled access to the evil weed under this scheme. Smith told *HIGH TIMES* she was not personally convinced that 18-to-21-year-olds *already* have untrammelled access to all the pot they want. Moreover, she said she believed the OMI wording would somehow permit potsmoking in public, though it certainly wouldn't. She said it called for a "rescinding of previous penalties," as though people already in jail would be getting out, or something of that nature; what she *meant*, further questioning showed, was that the measure doesn't define any weight limit for "personal, private" use as opposed to sale quantities: "If someone said, 'This two tons is for my personal use,' it might be impossible to disprove that."

But Sally Smith was most certainly *not* opposing the placement of OMI on the ballot. "We will not file our opposition until the Secretary of State makes a decision that

OMI is on the ballot."

Ultimately, the third week in September, the state's officers affirmed—for the fifth or sixth time, by now—that no, OMI would not be going on the ballot after all. By their own algebra, even taking into account the specific directions of the court to admit all those previously-discarded signatures, the magic number of "verifiable" signatures still fell exactly 853 names short of the 62,251 total required for success, they lied.

OMI, running on nothing but outrage now, went back to court with another writ of mandamus. As they'd pointed out in their first writ, a total of 57 *other* signatures in the selection sample had been rejected by the state's officials for no valid reason whatsoever; they had asked these signatures to be counted, since the state had made an obvious error in rejecting them. The Supreme Court had agreed with them, and then gone on to stipulate these several categories of *debatable* rejections—the out-of-county signatures, and so on—and had specifically ordered the state officers to reenter them and count them as valid. But in this particular part of the court's edict, no specific mention had been made of these 57 *obviously* valid signatures which had obviously been rejected by mistake. And so in this ultimate recount, these signatures had been counted as invalid, so that the total of "good" signatures would still fall exactly 853 short of the required total.

"Every one of those signatures is worth seventeen signatures," organizer Paul Stanford wearily calculated for *HIGH TIMES*. "Multiply those fifty-seven signatures by seventeen, and you get 969, which wipes out the deficit with plenty to spare. We're asking the court to compel Norma Paulus to show cause why she should not recount those names properly and put us on the ballot, or stand in contempt of the court's orders to do so in the first place."

Later on the day he said this, the local television stations all ran clips of state policemen suspiciously going through the OMI petition stacks, growling about "arresting" these people for "fraud." Later on the same day also, the Oregon State Supreme Court turned down OMI's contempt motion. It would be better procedure, they were told, to file such a motion in each one of the county circuit courts, and let the process drag out for however many months or years it might require.

"We always played by the rules," Lindsay Bradshaw was saying afterward, "because we were under the impression that they would play by the rules." But of course they broke the rules here, by selectively, instead of randomly, pulling signatures for a verification count. And since no one in OMI charged them with malfeasance when they did that, but chose instead to play this sort of patty cake, now OMI itself had broken the rules. But, in the process, they certainly did excavate a whole lot of invaluable detail about how the system really does work. **HT**

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Basuco: Giving coke a bad name

TRANS-HIGH MARKET ANALYSIS

by Bud Bogart

An allegedly-new type of toot called "basuco" is showing up in New York and on the West Coast. Basuco—Spanish for "base"—has a properly rotten reputation among veteran inner-city dope aficionados, though the current crop of middle-class cokesnorters never heard of it before, and so they tend to think it's something new and trendy. Actually, basuco is the intermediate freebase form of coke, one step away from coca leaves and one step before pure cocaine hydrochloride salt in the refining process. Down in South America, the *coqueros* harvest the coca-shrub leaves, pile them in ditches, pour kerosene on them, and foot-stomp them into a mushy, twiggy paste: and that's what basuco is, a flaky, rubbery, plasterish goo full of kerosene residue, cocaine, all the other assorted coca alkaloids, and miscellaneous traces of leaf, stem, and the toejam of oppressed Bolivian peasants. When it's smoked, in a pipe or rolled with tobacco or pot in a joint, basuco tends to mess people's lungs up even more quickly than regular freebase.

Ordinarily, the hillside plot tenders in Peru and Bolivia and Brazil (and lately—hot tip—northern Argentina) mush up their base in ditches near the coca-growing terraces, bundle it in plastic bags, and send it off to the clandestine lab complexes around Manaus in Brazil. There, after a more or less scientific conversion process, this awful stuff becomes the pure, white, snortable coke we all love/hate so much. When there's a surplus of basuco paste on the market down there, though—or when a whole bunch of refining labs get busted all at once by the *federales*—the producers tend to dump it on the local market thereabouts. Thus, slum peasants in Lima and Bogota for years have been smoking basuco cigarettes rolled in banana leaves, going psychotic on it and coughing up big bloody blotches of phlegm. And naturally the stuff has shown up on the big-city market from time to time, where cheap basuco (or *pasta*, as it's also called) has traditionally been associated with either down-and-out junkies or trigger-happy, crazy Latino coke dealer types.

But these idiot Yanqui coke-tooters will take to any awful sort of toot if you can convince them it's new and trendy. And ever since last spring, so much basuco has been smuggled in to the States that neighborhood dealers have had to invent heavy-duty Madison Avenue sales pitches for it. So now you

see people at parties torching up nasty old low-rent basuco, putting on the airs of real connoisseurs. Obviously P.T. Barnum, when he said there's a sucker born every minute, didn't anticipate this baby-boom generation: there must've been one born every 20 seconds or so all through the 1950s.

The reason for this season's landslide of basuco is complicated. It seems to have something to do with the lightning Colombian crackdown on coke labs last spring. In one single raid last April, on a complex of finishing labs along the Yari River in the Amazon jungle, the Colombian military picked up 30 tons of finished coke: 30 tons, more coke in one single seizure than the total of all previous seizures in the history of cocaine enforcement. That was a pretty unmistakable signal from the Bogota government that coke mafiosi were no longer welcome in Colombia, and most of them promptly left to consolidate operations in the western jungles of Brazil. Brazil, where the government can't even afford to buy bullets for its federal cops, is very shortly going to turn into a dope-producing *narcorepublic* that will make Colombia and Bolivia look like full-time Sunday schools by comparison.

In the meantime, while those thugs are shooting it out for primo coca-growing real estate along the Alto do Rio Negro west of Brasilia, the established coke-importing industry is enjoying something like an embarrassment of riches. With no species of central control on basuco production anymore, freelancers are running it straight from the jungles up into Miami, pretty much by the long ton. Here, most of it gets refined into snort coke in makeshift labs (see "High-Witness News," this issue) in Florida and the Bronx and on the Coast. But there's just too much of the stuff around for any one bunch of lab techs, and basuco goes bad pretty quickly if it's not turned into toot. And that's why neighborhood dealers are getting stuck with it, so that they have to invent ridiculous new medicine-show spiels for nasty old basuco.

Of course it's not exactly my place to be putting down any sort of dope that somebody else may like, for all I know. As an inner-city dope veteran, maybe I'm unduly prejudiced against this kerosene-ridden toejam. But when it comes to basuco, I go right along with Nancy Reagan any time it's offered to me: I just say no.

TRANS-HIGH MARKET QUOTATIONS

AUSTRALIA			
Domestic grass	quality varies	oz	100-120
		lb	1000-1400
Sydney sinsemilla	terrific toke	oz	120-150
		lb	1200-1400
Thai sticks	rare	one	20
Domestic hash	middlin'	oz	300-400
		lb	3200-3900
Lebanese hash	blond & beautiful	oz	400-450
		lb	4000-4200
Hash oil	when available	cap	30
LSD	tiles and microdots, freaky and fun	one	8-15
		100	150-210
Cocaine	A-1	gm	180-200
		oz	3300-3500
Amphetamine	fast and flashy	gm	100-110
		oz	1800-2000

CANADA			
Commercial Colombian	arf-arf	oz	90-100
		lb	750-850
Gold and red Colombian	likewise	oz	125
		lb	1100-1200
Hawaiian buds	almost non-existent	oz	325-350
		lb	2800-3600
Mexican tops	passable, usually available	oz	75-85
		lb	500-700
Homemade "cake" hash	impotent	gm	15
		oz	260
Afghan hash	flatblack	gm	15
		lb	3250
Kashmir hash	reddish, rocket fuel	gm	25
		oz	375
U.S. sinsemilla	excellent when available	oz	200
LSD	blots from California	one	4-10
		100	200-450
Methaqualone	same boots as in States	one	3-6
		100	275-450
Cocaine	steadily rising quality	gm	130-180
		oz	2000-3200

COLOMBIA			
Santa Marta golds, reds	pawn in army-rebel rumble	oz	15-20
		lb	75-110
Commercial domestic	distribution difficult	oz	5-10
		lb	50-100
Colombian hash	forgettable	oz	8-25
		lb	100-225
Hash oil	a lost cause	oz	150-200
		lb	1500-2000
Mushrooms	not worth the effort	oz	40-75
Cocaine	devalued pesos make this a buy	oz	175-225
		lb	2500-3500

ECUADOR			
Commercial Colombian	fresh as a flower	oz	7-10
		lb	60-100
Red and gold Colombian	surprisingly, not that much	oz	15-25
		lb	200
Sierra buds	passable	oz	6-10
		lb	70-100
Esmeraldas swamp grass	the worst	oz	2-4
		lb	40-60
Cocaine base	lots	gm	25-40
Cocaine	pure as the driven snow	gm	25-40
LSD	traded for blow	one	5

ITALY			
African weed	intermittent supply	gm	4
Tan Leb hash	pale and tasteless	gm	2
Moroccan 00	superb	gm	5
Black Afghani	lucid, but stony	gm	5
Kashmir charas	heavenly, aromatic	gm	12
LSD	reputedly counterfeit	ea	5
Cocaine	glistening rocks	gm	60!

JAMAICA			
Seeded highland gold	gold as the sun, mediocre head	oz	5
		lb	25
Highland sinsemilla	solid head, great sativa	oz	8
		lb	50
Homehewn hash	moist and exhilarating	oz	10
Mushrooms	watch yourself, some killers	oz	5
Cocaine	weakened U.S. disco toot	gm	100

MEXICO			
Guerrero gold	needles in a haystack	oz	35
		lb	200
Oaxacan	long-stem beauties	oz	10
		lb	90
Sinse	northern grown, sativa	oz	25
		lb	250
Acapulco gold	on the stalk	oz	20
		lb	175
Hash	greenish brown, a snoozer	oz	15
		lb	150
Cocaine	much fake, pass it on	gm	30-50
Methaqualone	much pharmaceutical, okay	ea	1-2

UNITED STATES			
Area Bulletins			
Morristown, N.J.	Colombian gold, primo	oz	75
Columbus, Ohio	summer blotter acid	ea	3
Eureka, Calif.	purple kush, locally preserved	oz	200
San Francisco	East Coast coke, danced on	gm	90
Milwaukee, Wisc.	Colombian 'mersh: green, passable	lb	560
Albany, N.Y.	ephedrine tabs, undisguised	ea	50
		12	5
Tucson, Ariz.	Mexican green, moist, lightly seeded	lb	500
Taos, N.M.	local mountain indica	oz	200-250
		lb	2500
Marin County, Calif.	pure, shiny flake	gm	100-120
New York City	"boss black repro" Leb soaked in hash oil	oz	1800-2000
		lb	1700

National Market			
U.S. sinsemilla	early leaf, baby buds	oz	140-200
		lb	1600-1950
	last year's stockpile	oz	225-300
		lb	2500-3000

Commercial Mexican	browns, greens, reds, etc.	oz	55-85
Top-grade Mexican	arm-size buds	lb	650-950
Jamaican	negligible supply	oz	90-130
		lb	900-1350
Jamaican sinsemilla	likewise scarce	oz	60-80
		lb	650-850
Commercial Colombian	healthy supply, prices up	oz	90-130
Primo Colombian	triumphant return	lb	900-1250
Thai sticks	new variety: el cheapo, big sticks	oz	55-70
		lb	550-690
Loose Thai	season starting slowly	oz	60-80
		lb	650-790
Hawaiian	Where's the buds?	oz	90-135
		lb	1100-1400
Lebanese hash	supply down	oz	160-210
		lb	1600-2000
Black Afghani hash	gummy and fumey	oz	235-300
		lb	2700-3000
Paki hash	black spheres	oz	110-140
		lb	900-1100
Psilocybin mushrooms	large, succulent cubensis	oz	150-300
Peyote	hard to find	lb	1400-2200
LSD	red-heart blotter, 100 mikes	one	150-250
		100	1200-2000
Cocaine	holding steady	gm	100
		1/8	80-120
		oz	250-350
Methaqualone	mixed phonies, mostly Valium	ea	1500-2500
		100	3-7
Methamphetamine	on the comeback trail	gm	200-400
			120-160

Alaska			
Commercial Colombian	nada	oz	50-65
Domestic sinsemilla	'tis the season	1/4 oz	50-650
Mexican weed	most available	oz	50
		lb	200
Mainland sinsemilla	immigrant flow	oz	50-65
Thai sticks	timberland	oz	500-600
		lb	225-300
Lebanese hash	big mover	one	2000-2750
		lb	20
		gm	2400-2650
Cocaine	now and then, not bad either	oz	10
		gm	130-200
LSD	blots	oz	100-175
		one	2000-2800
Methaqualone	bootkickers	one	5
		100	350-500
		100	5
			350

Hawaii			
Puna buds	uncharacteristic scarcity	oz	225-275
		lb	2200-2750
Kona gold	western-slope beauties	oz	225-275
		lb	2000-2500
Waikiki wacky	sparkles with resin	oz	250-275
		lb	2500-2700
Maui wowie	overpriced, overrated	oz	225-275
		lb	2400-3000
LSD	fresh from the lab	one	2-4
Mushrooms	hot from the lava beds, dried	oz	150
Cocaine	not a big mover	gm	75-125
		oz	2050-3000
Amphetamines	over the counter from S.A.	one	2

Letter from Ireland

Basic liberties being curtailed in the Old Sod gives rise to feelings of savage indignation.

The Republic of Ireland last summer passed a sweeping new Misuse of Drugs Act, which essentially gives the police there the power to make arrests pretty much at random, with no sort of probable cause required, simply by citing people for "drug" offenses. As a sort of corollary to this new act, the Irish "Guardia" can also seize books and publications and recordings pretty much at random, and charge their possessors or merchandisers with promoting the misuse of drugs. Although various thoughtful legislators voiced opposition to various parts of the act, they were all bullied into silence by organized right-wing "parents coalitions"—people who persistently held up copies of HIGH TIMES Magazine in the Dublin legislature to show what they were supposedly so concerned about. Any slightest alteration in the Misuse of Drugs Act's draconian wording, they promised, would have this terrible drug magazine all over the children of Ireland. Which is peculiar, since HIGH TIMES was never sold in Ireland before then. We don't have any idea where those "parents" got the copies they were waving around, but we know they never paid us for them personally.

Anyhow, one Coleen in County Connaught was sincerely outraged enough about it to write to the local papers. When none of them would run this letter—out of prudent fear that they might subsequently be busted for "promoting the misuse of drugs"—she sent it here.—Ed.

The Politics Of Something Less Than Ecstasy

It has always been accepted, by Vice Regal and native governors alike, that the Irish should enjoy a lower standard of freedom—a more "carefully rationed" dose of liberty—than the English. Once one has accepted that proposition as justified, probably on the grounds that Celts are too excitable and silly to be allowed a loose rein, it follows that the legislation enacted by successive native governors to limit the liberty of the people is for our own good, and that no reasonable objection could be made to any of it.

The 1984 Misuse of Drugs Act is just such a piece of legislation, formulated carefully by our masters for our own good. That we were not consulted is a matter neither here nor there. It may well be that the Roman Catholic Church was consulted on our behalf, since that body commands the allegiance of a majority of a majority. What could be fairer or simpler?

Now, the Misuse of Drugs Act of 1984 passed through the Senate on July 11 after a 45-minute debate. Compare that to the

lengthy speeches and counter-speeches to be expected, were the subject bog drainage in Mayo, say! The legislation came into effect in full on October 1, and strengthens the law in a number of areas where weaknesses have existed in the past. The Guardia will be able to search any home, building or vehicle on the most trifling suspicion, without the tiresome necessity of obtaining any kind of warrant beforehand. Fines and prison sentences have been increased drastically. The definition of "cannabis" has been broadened to ensure that no amateur cultivator can possibly escape conviction on a technicality. Presumably this means that new recruits to the ever-expanding Guardia will be required to take a course in applied botany.

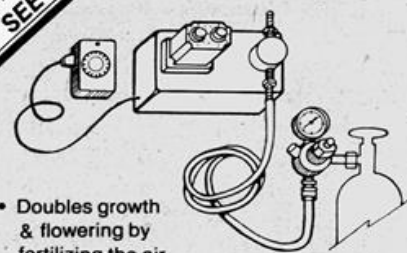
More interestingly still, it now becomes an offense to advocate any kind of misuse of drugs, or to possess or distribute any material likely to encourage the misuse of controlled substances. Persons possessing editions of Carroll's *Alice In Wonderland* would be well advised to remove the plate depicting Alice conversing with a caterpillar which is seated on a mushroom (!) and smoking a hookah!! Libraries must be combed thoroughly for such works as DeQuincey's immortal 1822 classic, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, or Dickens' *Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Get them out of the house quick, before the Guardia arrive! And the same goes for your incriminating garments, badges, assorted pot memorabilia and—it was to be expected—your record collection. You will be committing a truly serious offense under the Misuse of Drugs Act by just having them, and a far worse offense for letting anyone hear them.

Senator Ryan, to his great credit, did have distinct misgivings about this last aspect of the 1984 legislation, but found himself barely supported by two other mild objectors, and backed down. The Minister of Health, you see, was advised that it would be impossible to "prohibit such publications as HIGH TIMES," that estimable American monthly, without banning books, too. I wonder how many libraries in Ireland are now to be searched. Will priests, nuns, bishops, canons and curates preside over book-burnings?

It is interesting to reflect that in Victorian times, throughout the British Isles—not just in England—no administration would have considered it justified to interfere with any subject's desire to alter his or her consciousness. There were, it is true, many social inhibitions, but there were few legal prohibitions. A man or woman who threw a hashish and opium party for the neighborhood might be cut dead by the county society, but no criminal charges would—or could—be laid. —Mary Jane Sativa

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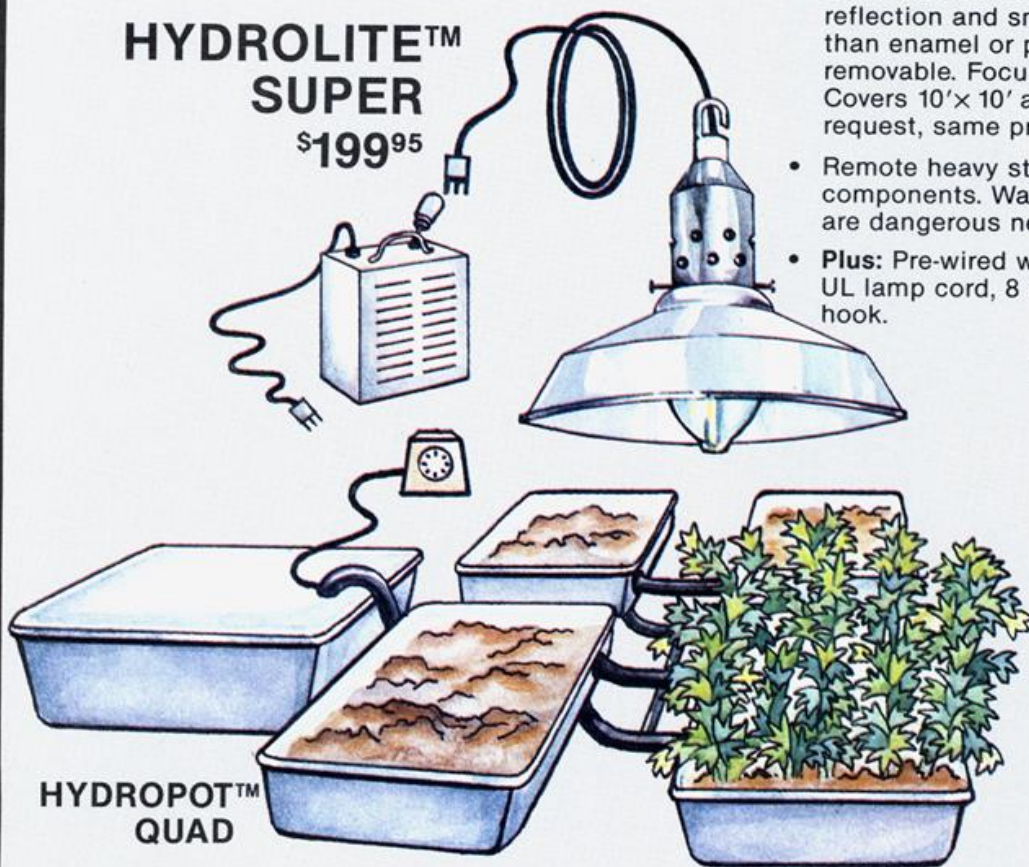
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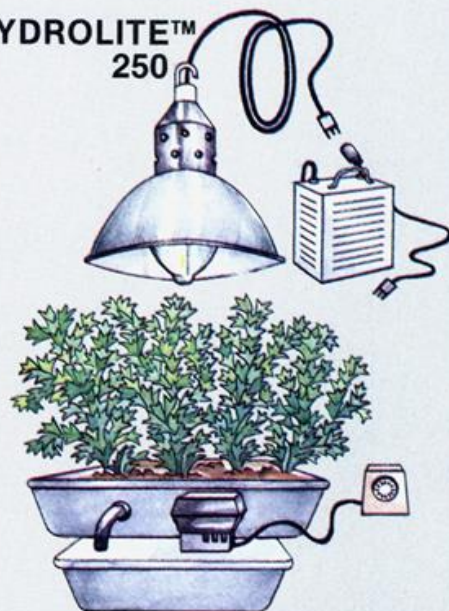
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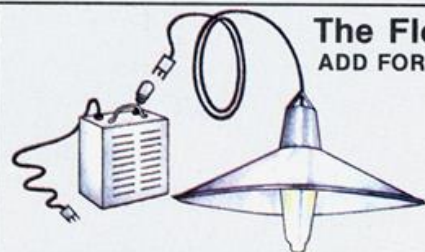
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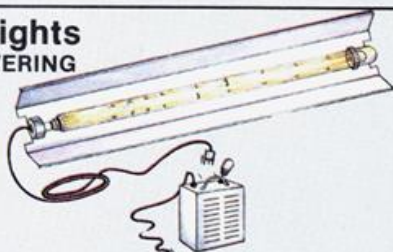


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*Fahrdochmal nach Ost Berlin. Wahnsinn!
Da leben nette Menschen dein. Wahnsinn!*

*Take a trip to East Berlin. Crazy! Nice
people livin' there inside. Crazy!*

— German pop group Lilli Berlin

Rocking and screeching westward on a dimly lit subway, the noon-to-midnight East Berlin excursion ends in exhaustion. The last train on a Friday night brings you to Thälmannplatz Station. It's just a short walk to the Wall. You near the checkpoint's tiny walkway and massive concrete barriers. Passport and visa get a preliminary checking.

Your passport disappears. A stone-faced border Polizei in a wishy-washy gray uniform has shoved it through a slot to another room. Do they photograph it?

"Did you enjoy your stay here with us?" the guard asks.

Wishing you could just fall asleep in your shoes, you open your bags. This time you don't have to empty the contents of your pockets out onto that table.

Your passport returns for a third, final, close look-in-the-face. As the guard hands your passport back, a curt "*Danke schön*" means you're free to leave.

Reentering the subway at West Berlin's Kochstrasse Station, red-and-white Marlboro posters welcome you to a more familiar world. Just an hour earlier it had been a night of heavy East-West talk/talk at the far end of the (divided) subway line, on foot through the bars and blustery winter streets of East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg with the German Democratic Republic's subculture.

Just before eight we stood before a bright orange door covered with graffiti, inscriptions of numerous come and gone. A makeshift sticker warned: THE PEOPLE BEHIND THIS DOOR ARE THE PEOPLE YOUR PARENTS WARNED YOU ABOUT.



EAST BERLIN

by Tom Starr

The door opened to reveal a young man in T-shirt, jeans and thick woolen socks. His smile was the only introduction necessary. Pressing flat against the wall of the tiny hallway, he motioned us to enter a small room. The floorboards creaked.

A pile of books, an old typewriter and a number of seashells lay on an ancient desk. Some postcards of Hungary gave way to a poster on the opposite wall. It was a drawing of Jesus Christ breaking a gun over his knee. Beneath it was a pile of mattresses, and brown corduroy slipcover and a young woman. She looked up from the letter she was writing. "Hi," she said. "Happy to see you."

Christoph and Martina live in this two-room cold-water flat. It's three flights up off the back courtyard of a graystone tenement on Schönhauser Allee.

This is East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg—the Prenzlau Hill District. Christoph and Martina's place is just one of x-thousand similar flats, built to house Berlin's turn-of-the-century proletarian masses.

It's definitely no-frills, with a small coal stove in one room and a gallon-and-a-half calcium-caked electric water heater in the kitchen. The stairwell may have been painted some time before the First World War. Out the door and down a half-flight of stairs will get you to the toilet, shared with the occupants of two similar nests.

"I know it's not much," commented Christoph, "but neither is the rent—fifteen marks a month!"

Fifteen East German marks is either \$1.80 or \$5.40 U.S., depending on where and how you change your money. Some of the area's residents pay nothing at all, squatting in flats somehow forgotten by the Central Housing Authority.

These Prenzlauer Berg tenements have become the property of the very young—and those too old to move out. The East German middle class has left for the prefab *Neubaten*—new buildings—in neighboring districts.

Just to the north of state office buildings and city-center Alexanderplatz, the Prenzlauer Berg ghetto has become home to East Germany's indigenous subculture.

Our friend Christoph is just one example. Having quit his job as a factory mechanic shortly before turning 22, he now spends every other afternoon tearing tickets in an East German movie theater. For this he gets the East

German minimum monthly wage—250 marks, less than \$100.

Martina earns even a bit more than Christoph, working part-time as a kindergarten teacher at a semiprivate day-care center in what once was a vegetable shop. Martina is 19, a small blonde with warm brown eyes. Together they manage to make ends meet.

Their flat has neither a TV nor a phone. Two bicycles parked in the courtyard are their primary means of transportation. "We don't tend to travel very far," explained Martina. "Most of our friends live nearby."

Our introduction to the virtues of voluntary simplicity in the socialist state was interrupted by a knock. Harry and Heino had arrived.

Heino is not the type of person you'd expect to meet behind the Iron Curtain. He wears a lopsided grin, a small golden earring in his pierced left ear, and his short blond hair brushed up. Heino is a 20-year-old Punk.

Heino gets by doing odd jobs, pulling weeds in the cemetery or carrying coal. He's begun investing his spare change in black-market Levis.

Friends say Heino ought to watch his step. He could get classified *asozial*—antisocial—and land in jail. In East Germany the state guarantees you a job—and not working is a crime.

Harry gets his Levis from Heino. He's also got a U.S. Army field jacket and nearly new Adidas running shoes—"but I won't tell you where I got 'em."

Harry is something of a young Turk at 21. His hair is free-flow Keith Richard do-it-yourself thatch. He's got muscles, too, picked up as a roadie for a popular East Berlin rock group. It's on and off, the pay's not much, but Harry gets to travel all over—inside East Germany.

The six of us headed downstairs, through the courtyard and out into the street.

We passed up a crowded corner bar too smoke-filled to breathe, piling instead into the bowling alley on Lychener Strasse. Here the air had itself been yellowed by burnt masses of cheap Karo cigarettes. Their crumpled packs lay among the overflowing ashtrays, the half-full and nearly empty beer glasses covering the counter. We stood just inside the door, looking over the bar lined with an odd assortment of older characters.

• Calling our attention to the back room, Christoph winked and whispered, "More of us."

Through the haze one could make out typical European longhairs—the

young, green-alternative types so prevalent in London, Amsterdam and West Berlin. Here in East Berlin this was to have been our first watering hole—but there was no room anywhere and it didn't look as if anyone was getting ready to leave. Unable to move forward, we had to back out.

Turning to the street, Martina spat out a Berlin epithet for a king-size crap: "*Grosse Scheisse!* Whenever I wanna go out the damn bars are too full. Too bad we haven't got thousands of those trendy little places like you do in the West."

The West is a place Martina's never been to. The Wall was built before she was born. In those "trendy little places" she would be indistinguishable from her West Berlin Fraulein counterparts—corduroy jeans, bright purple hand-knit sweater and hand-me-down fur jacket.

It's sad how the Wall limits her freedom of movement. She would bicycle to some of those places in 10 minutes, if she could. She gets her information about places she's never seen second-hand from visitors, and electronically via the airwaves.

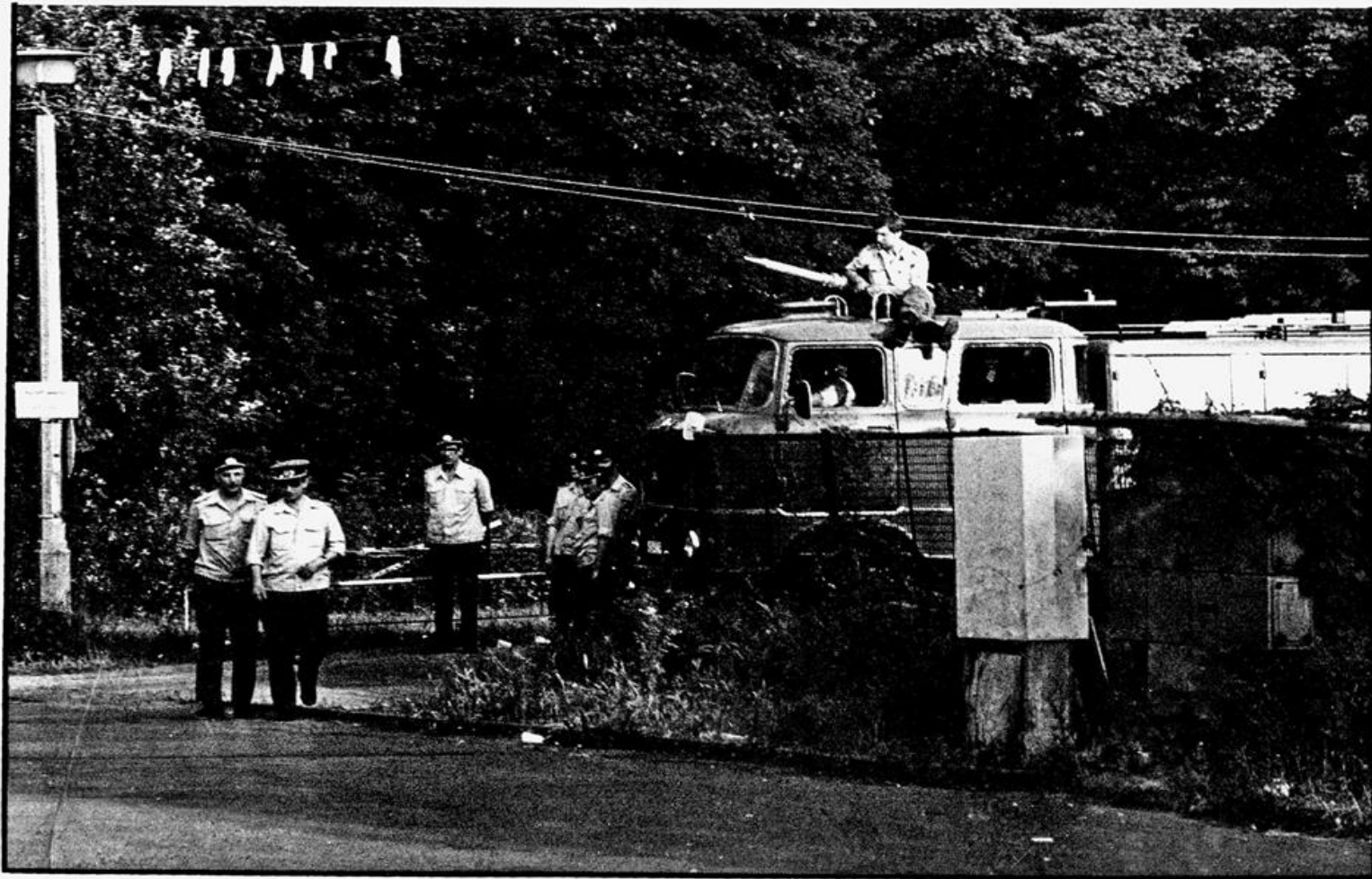
East Germans, it seems, are in love with West German broadcasting. It's no crime to tune in and everybody does. Prenzlauer Berg residents have access to three West German, two East German, American, French, British and Russian television programs. The latest sounds from London or Los Angeles are available on Stereo-FM. The East German stations do their socialist best to keep pace, but run a poor second.

Just 30-odd miles from the Polish border, the East German subculture looks and listens West, a fact even Communist party boss Erich Honecker can't escape:

"Deep in your heart, Erich, dear I know that you, too, are a rocker. You don your leather jacket Lock the door to the 'Klo' And tune in West Radiol!"

—German rock star Udo Lindenberg
We hopped streetcar-line 4 as it rolled down Dimitrovstrasse. Heino rocked back and forth, turning the crank on the trolley's ticket machine, noodling out ticket after ticket. Although these cost 20 pfennigs each—about eight cents—Heino nonchalantly weaved through the car, waving a trolley-ticket streamer several feet long. "Why pay?" he joked. "There's enough for all!"

The Prenzlauer Berg district is visually similar to its West Berlin sister district, Wedding. Together they formed



● *The Wall may be big, strong and ugly but that don't mean it can't be breached.*

Berlin's Roter Kiez—the Red Ghetto—before and during the Nazi years. Hundreds of Socialist and Communist party members lived and worked in the endless rows of four-story graystones. In East Berlin the birthplaces and residences of those who died in the concentration camps are marked by small commemorative plaques. In the West, similar houses are left anonymous.

Heino was not impressed by this observation. "So what?" he shrugged. "Our party leaders have become petty bourgeois bureaucrats. Man, they are no more alive than those commemorative plaques!"

Harry warned us that the next place might be full of *Spiesser*—average middle-class citizens. We swung off the trolley and pushed into a backstreet dive near Prenzlauer Allee. It was a cacophonous din, a middle-European low-life rerun of the barroom in *Star Wars*.

Harry'd set his sights a bit high—this was lower-than-middle-class proletarian-industrial urbanity. The language spoken was Berliner, a verbal German form too vile to be given recognition as a formal dialect. Pure, clear High German relates to Berliner as Bach

relates to breaking wind.

Berliner is bludgeon German. To speak it (im)properly, one must be a crass, rude and obnoxious working-class native Berliner, preferably drunk.

Dressed in nondescript zip-front turtle-necks and beige polyester slacks complemented by those ubiquitous Eastern Block brown shoes, the native Berliner boys-at-the-bar appeared to be more in need of a shave than another beer. Slicked-back, thin greasy hair seemed to be a high fashion here—parted low on the side, then combed up-and-over to cover the bald spots.

A woman sat on a barstool strong enough to support an ox. Her grossly plump posterior sagged over the edge. She had a silver-blue beehive piled on over her fatty face. This wasn't our crowd, but there were two small tables left unoccupied.

As Heino and Harry pushed those tables together, we got a blast of bar-keeper Berliner live—informing us in no uncertain terms that this was "*Verboten!*" This information packed in a number of unpleasant references to our looks and presumed mental capabilities.

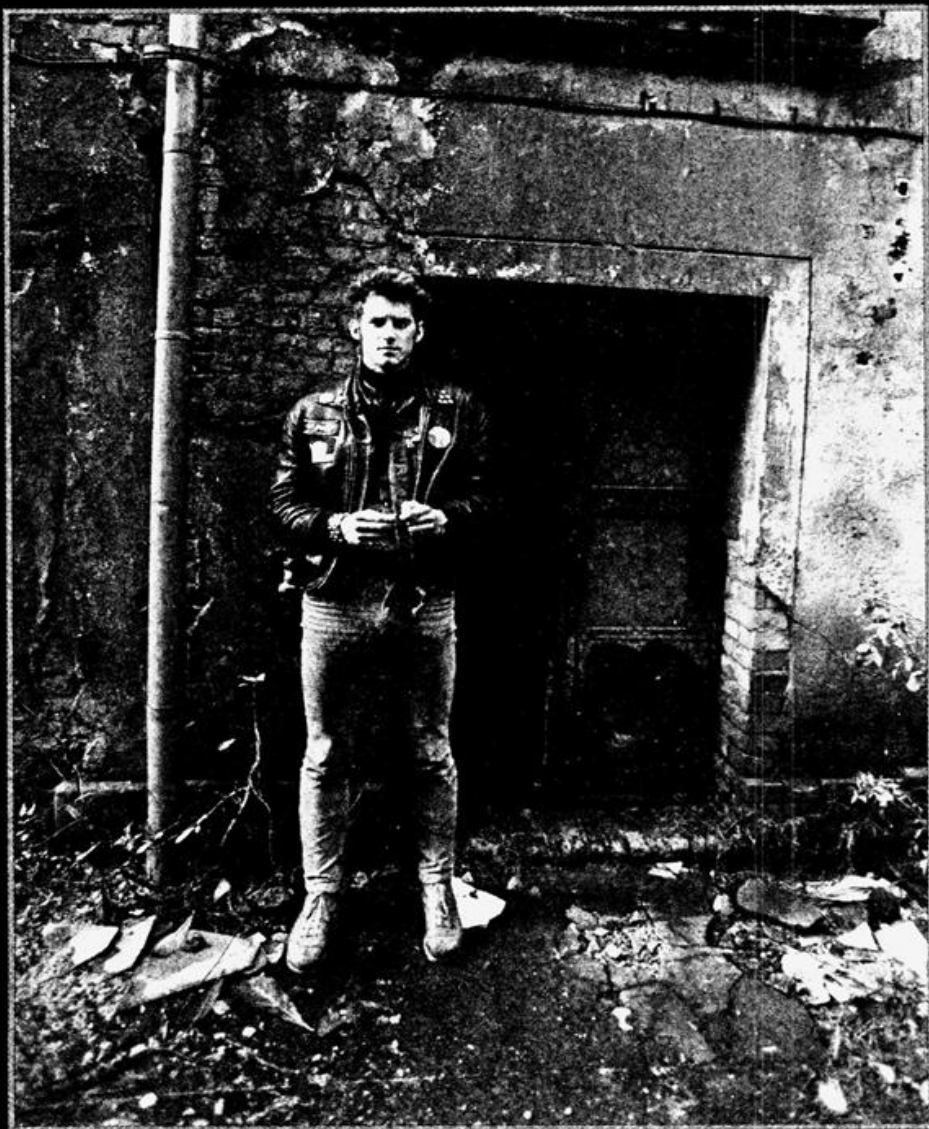
"*Scheisspiesserladen*"—loose-tongued Berliner for "Fuck this joint"—was Heino's retort and that was that. "*Raus hier!*" ("Get out!") No beer for us.

The suds in the place had come in heavyweight half-liter crystal mugs. Heavy-headed foam at one mark per. On our way up the hill we passed a couple of drunks wrenching it all out in the doorways. "Alcohol" commented Christoph, "is a big problem *hier bei uns*—here with us."

Alcohol is a big problem *da druben* in West Germany, too. Berlin as a whole boasts more bars per capita than anywhere else in the world. Alcohol is German National People's Drug *Nummer Eins*. The German's God-given niche on this earth seems to be the communal brewing and consumption of *das Bier*.

Rausgeschmissen—getting thrown out—didn't bother us much. We were getting high on our own conversation, beat Marxist pop-and-political patter. There was beer back at the flat.

"You should have been here last weekend," admonished Martina. "There was a poetry reading at a friend of ours place with two young guys who'd been published in the West."



Q: When did the first Punks appear in East Germany?

A: The first Punks appeared here about the same time as we got information from the West about Punks there, in London or somewhere. They got put down by our press here. A lot of us really like that, the way they wore their clothes, cut their hair—the heavy image.

Of course, the feeling was already here before that. Plenty of younger people here have got a no-future attitude.

Q: What were your reasons?

A: First to look different and break out of the uniform mass. Another reason was my middle-class, materialist parents. There's other reasons, too.

Maybe I just don't like being German. Germans are by nature "Kleinbürger" and "Spiesser"—good little citizens and middle-class materialists. I hate the false front and the mask that's always there and nobody ever takes it off! Nobody ever does what they really want to. There's always a limit to everything.

I wanna go beyond the limits. I started wising up after I finished school and started working. The whole biz just didn't add up. They tried to make a machine out of me. Get up in the morning and go to work. Come home in the evening—drink beer, beat your wife and watch TV. Go to bed. That makes me sick. Makes a lot of other people here sick, too.

That I haven't exactly got a positive attitude toward the German Democratic Republic doesn't mean I'd rather go to West Germany. Here or there, it's the same kind of crap. There's always the state—a power wanting to keep power and ready to use all necessary force. I had to get out. I didn't want to get into that. I just wanted to be my other self. □

These semipublic readings and meetings on private property have become a staple in the Prenzlauer Berg subculture. Renting a public place for that kind of thing is next-to-impossible in East Berlin. No permit is required for a meeting on private property. The people just crowd on in.

Christoph claimed to have grown accustomed to green Wartburg sedans parked in front of a house where a party's going on. The policemen inside apparently need only to watch the door and never to come up. "There's always a plainclothes pig or two inside, anyway," according to Harry.

The *Stasi*—the state security police—have been known to drag in more prominent subculture residents before the petty bureaucrats to "clear up a few points." Not always that receptive toward individual expression en masse on private property, the East German state has a number of screws to turn as it sees fit.

The *asozial elemente* may be banished to the provinces, forbidden even to visit Berlin. You can get a "PM-12," a kind of second-class I.D. card restricting travel to the territorial limits of the German Democratic Republic. If convicted of "blatant disrespect for state order," you may go to jail. Many have.

Holding forth on the two Punk bands that provided the music after the reading, Heino continued:

"There wasn't enough room to stand anywhere. The whole place started moving to the music. At two people per square foot the ceiling started to shake. It was great."

The state, it seems, has lost its monopoly on rock bands. East Germany makes the most of its government-sponsored professional rock bands in the state media. The bands are technically highly proficient, but lack bite.

Local Prenzlauer Berg garage bands make up for their lack of technical expertise and equipment with a heavy beat and their rough-and-ready *null Bock* attitude. That's "no goat"—loosely translated "I don't wanna"—as in:

"I don't wanna work
I don't wanna fill the quota
I don't wanna be a middle-class jerk"
—Rosa Extra

State reaction to the Prenzlauer Berg subculture has indeed been contradictory. Free speech and assembly are tolerated in the area to a degree unknown elsewhere in the Eastern Block. The city housing authority has come to admit it can't keep track of all

available places. Young people often move in when and where they can. Here you can get the required permit later.

At a bombed-out courtyard in the Schliemannstrasse, a grand street party had gone off without a hitch—and with an official permit—the previous summer. Harry claimed brigade activists from the local light-bulb works were seen “discussing the merits of old Rolling Stones records” with young Punks. Local longhairs had danced to the music of three Punk bands until well past sundown. According to Harry, it was a community “minus the middle-class jerks!”

Life around Prenzlauer Berg is indeed easier when the weather warms up. Small street cafés open for business in the early afternoon, offering Rumanian wine and Nicaraguan coffee to a student/worker mixed clientele. The corner bars often put a table or two out on the sidewalk. The elderly often spend hours in their window niches, observing the street and the beer you drink being delivered by horse-drawn wagon.

The tinny, two-cycle Trabant cars crowding the streets gives the renowned *Berliner Luft*—the Berlin air—a state-socialist Eastern European grittiness missing in the city’s western districts.

Coming full circle by this time, we were back up the stairwell to Christoph and Martina’s orange door.

As she fished an oversized key out of her pocket, Martina explained that the summer street fairs had done much to ease tensions on the hill, with some of the elderly becoming active participants:

“Cleaning up afterwards made for good public relations. We’ve even taken a liking to some of the older residents. Some of them to us. We try to help out where we can, like carrying coal.”

Heino retained a more personal perspective: “You still can’t expect too much solidarity around here when you got big earrings and orange hair.”

Back in the kitchen, Christoph hauled in a bag of bottled beer that had been cooling on a hook outside the window. Harry used the edge of the kitchen

table and a fast fist-tap to knock the caps off. He passed around the slowly foaming bottles. Christoph and Martina leaned against the sink and kitchen cupboard respectively. Heino sat more on than at the table. We exchanged views.

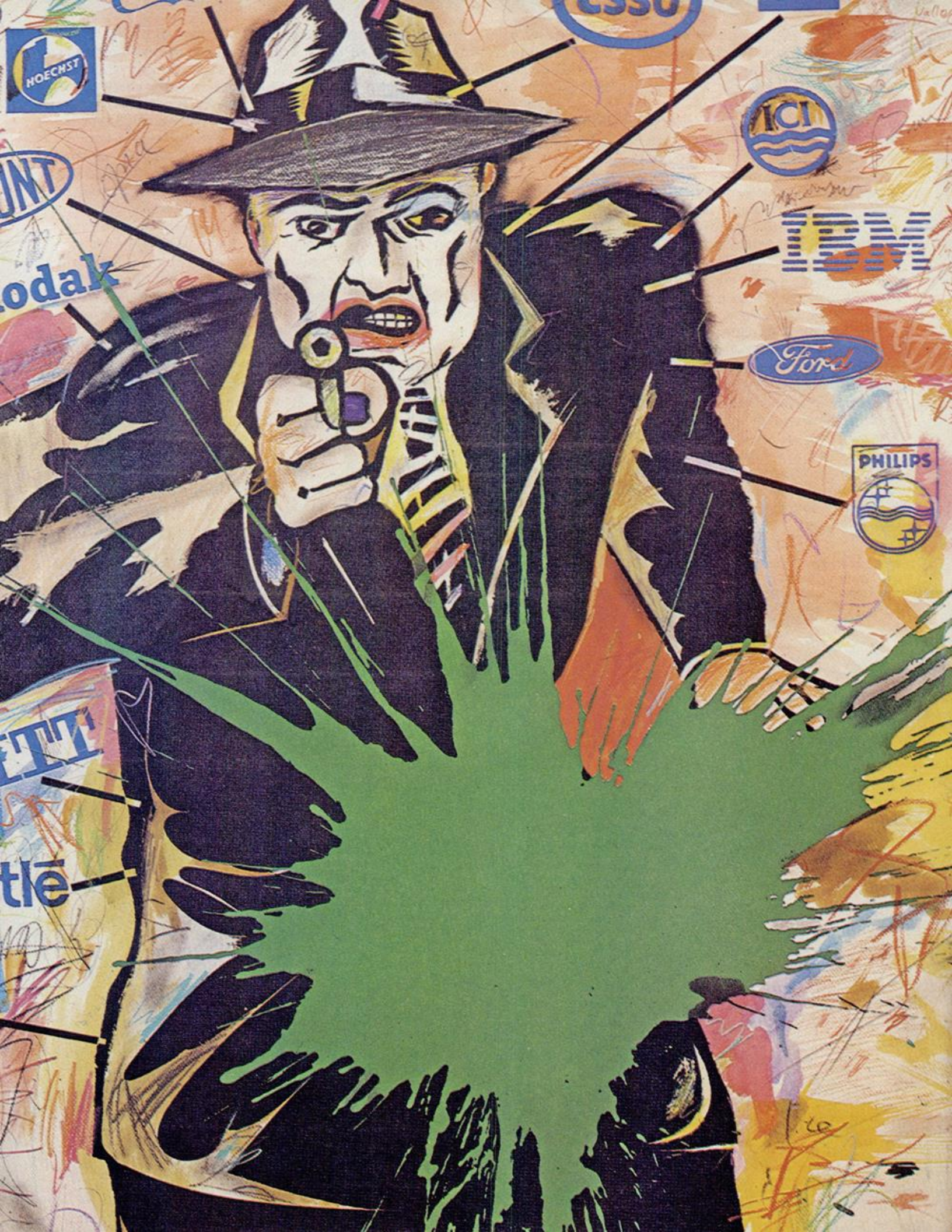
All feared that the recent deployment of new missiles in East and West could cause a crackdown. A tightening of Marxist-Leninist party principles would surely put an end to the free-form Prenzlauer Berg street scene. Personal contacts to Western visitors have recently been “discouraged” and simply forbidden in some cases. A hard-line government shift might result in a number of young people being “asked to leave the country.”

Heino gave us a boots-on-the-table, bottle-in-hand private manifesto we could all agree with:

“They [the state bureaucrats] always act like we want an instant revolution. We just wanna realize our own ideas of living together. We want our own theater and our own music. I don’t need no new-furniture color-TV boredom. I just want more me. We want more us.” □

● *East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg*—“You still can’t expect too much solidarity around here when you got big earrings and orange hair.”





The love of truth is the blood of honor.
—traditional Spanish saying

Right now, Barcelona is the *numero uno* city in Europe. It was Paris in the early '60s, London in the late '60s, Amsterdam in the early '70s, Berlin in the late '70s—and now, Barcelona, the city for the weighty '80s. The big stories coming out of this old Mediterranean port—they have been in business at the same location for 2,000 years, since it was founded by Hannibal and named after his family *Barca*—the big news from Barcelona is a mosaic of three *c*'s: an exciting new explosion of comic-book artists; the decriminalization of cannabis possession; and a renaissance in Catalanian culture and politics.

"Spain is in the path of history," says my host José-Maria Berenguer, a descendant of the 14th-century counts of Barcelona, as he rolls a joint of better-grade Moorish hash. We are sitting on the top level of his house, a three-story red-brick cupola perched precariously on a hill in La Floresta, a Malibu-type suburb of Barcelona. Through the round-cornered triangular windows I can see the fully bloomed yellow mimosa trees close by; in the far distance a view of Montserrat, the sacred mountain, where Richard Wagner had Parsival find the Holy Grail. A rooster is crowing.

"We have economic problems," says José-Maria, touching a match to the paper and inhaling. "And then there's the Basques. But there was so much repression here—forty years of Franco's discouragement—it surprises me—Spain has more freedom of expression now than anywhere else. We are one of the three freest countries in the world!"

He should know. José-Maria is the founder and editor-in-chief of *Ediciones La Cupula* (Plaza Beates 3, Barcelona 3) and a



BARCELONA

by William Levy

El Vibora started in Christmas 1979. Together with *Makoki*, another mag published by José-Maria, they reach over 200,000 Spanish youth each month, becoming an active instrument for social change. Even the chauvinistic French had to admit, albeit begrudgingly, that *El Vibora* and *Makoki* were the best journals of comic-book illustration "south of Clignancourt."

"*El Vibora* features authors, rather than characters," José-Maria says, leaning forward to pass me a joint. "In *Makoki* the stories are shorter, based on character, more human. We also do a certain amount of public acts called 'Comic i Viva.' We go to small towns, have a comic workshop, then together with the students make large paper murals visualizing stories on local events, local history, or current grievances. We are going to do this in prisons now—for inmates under eighteen. Our magazines are very popular in prisons; we send free copies to anyone in prison who asks; they are all received; no censorship."

This is more than a little bit amazing since these strips deal with meta-violence, child-sex, anarchy, ridicule of authority, incest, vampirism, hermaphrodites, buggery and drugs—all good stories, well drawn. *Ediciones La Cupula* has also published about 20 books, illustrated books. "We don't do literature," José-Maria explains proudly. "We do the American Gilbert Shelton and Liberatore, the Italian creator of *RanXerox*, but mostly new Spanish artists like Calonge, Ceesepe, Mariscal. Our best-seller is by Gallardo and Mendivilla; our biggest international success is *Anarcoma* by el Nazario."

That evening I visit with Nazario—the most talked about artist in Europe. The high esteem given his work is perhaps best illustrated by this anecdote: Recently a large bookshop was broken into. The burglar left the hundreds of thousands of dollars in stock untouched, didn't even attempt to peel the money box. The only items stolen were two small original illustrations by Nazario.

Nazario was born in Seville in 1944 and has lived in Barcelona since 1971. He started his artistic career as a member of the *El Rollo Enmascarado* group. Among his publications are *La Pirana Divina* (featuring sex murder and scatology, it was clandestinely published during Franco's reign in black and white, on cheap paper, a *samizdat*-type publication), *San Reprimonio y las Piranas* and *Nazario*, which in-

cludes all his work up to 1980. *Anarcoma*, the adventures of a hermaphrodite private eye who battles against the Black Count and his Knights of the Holy Order of St. Repressions and Metamorphozia and her One-Eyed Piranhas, is a comic strip bearing little resemblance to *Mickey Mouse*. It originally appeared in episodes in *El Vibora* and has since been published in Spain, France, Germany and the United States. Given the explicit nature of this book, Spain's newfound freedom of expression is underlined by its not being ghettoized in art, adult, comic or underground shops; rather, it is openly displayed on the Ramblas, lying next to Borges' translation of Walt Whitman.

Without doubt, Nazario is one of the best contemporary chroniclers of the underworld of human desires. Like the writings of Jean Genet, Kathy Acker and early Burroughs, Nazario's visual art defines the status and meaning of revolt; his style is a form of refusal; he elevates crime into an art by the celebration of the abnormal and the forbidden; and, without de Sadeian ironies makes Goya's Disasters of War look like children's book illustrations. One frame, for example, shows *Anarcoma* nude—large breasts and an equally large cock. She has been captured by her enemies, forced to have sex with them. In revenge *Anarcoma* has bitten off the head of one of their cocks and spits it out of her bloody mouth. Whoops—one is almost tempted to say—your id is showing.

Nazario lives on the Plaza Real in the heart of the Barrio Gotica, the old quarter with its narrow, medieval streets. The Plaza Real, a beautiful square with palm trees, is the scene of a daily thieves market and a convenient place to score. Just walking through, slowly, I am able to buy a thin stick of Moroccan hash for 1,000 pesetas from Tony of Bilbao whom I surprise by breaking off a piece and eating it on the spot. He also offers me coke, heroin and LSD.

"It looks like Beirut," Nazario says with a thin smile as I enter his flat. No doubt about it. There are broken walls, clouds of dust and plaster everywhere, and in one corner a table, a few wooden chairs, above it a handmade platform bed. This spartan decor, however, is tempered by a festive mood: tonight everyone is dressing up for the annual Gay Lib Carnival. Before my eyes Nazario metamorphoses from a mild-looking provincial schoolteacher wearing black flannel pants, a crew-neck sweater, button-down shirt and wire-rimmed glasses—he transforms

himself, with makeup, satin and lace and a powdered white wig, into a dragged-out Marie-Antoinette. Music is playing—*Sevillnas de Oro*—hard-thumping guitar and loud guttural singing: "*mucho dinero... mucho dinero*." Nazario's friend Alejandro is dressed in black lace stockings, a corset, toeless high heels and an elaborately peaked hat made from a plastic garbage bag. Three other men enter, two in drag; another is wearing the mufti of a European coke dealer: leather zip-up jacket, tight jeans, expensive short boots and an executive haircut. There's no mirror in this sparsely furnished flat, so lines appear on the smooth, hard surface of my new book of poems *Die Kunst des Flirtens*.

While all this is going on Nazario and I are having a conversation in French, a language neither one of us speaks well, if at all. Nazario's favorite artists are Albrecht Dürer and Tom of Finland. Surprisingly, he has never been in prison for his art, but once for being a transvestite. Says Nazario: "Only for two days, that was four years ago, during Carnival, when homosexuals attacked police with bottles, tables and chairs."

He was also the victim of an unusual occurrence in Spanish drawing: one of his pictures was plagiarized by Lou Reed in the double album *Live—Take No Prisoners*; it was the whole center-spread. "I give him a small magazine, *Rock Comix*, with my picture on the cover, because I like him, no?" Nazario explains. "Lou Reed tells me, 'I like it maybe for a single': I was very proud. Two years later it appeared as full centerspread, without crediting Nazario. And to add injury to insult, it was used everywhere except in Spain. In Spain Nazario was not part of the album."

In this animated mood I suddenly find myself back on the street, crossing the Plaza Real arm in arm with four transvestites. All the thieves, dealers, pimps and whores shout to el Nazario, by name, in friendship.

Down a narrow dark alley to the Carrer de Raurich, we turn and enter the Café Kike for drinks and rendezvous. When a humongous guy comes in wearing a blond beehive wig, a fire-engine-red dress with the hem six inches above the knee and a pillow on his stomach, under the dress, to make him appear pregnant, I decide to take the last train back to La Floresta. Nazario suggests I stay. He offers me the opportunity of sleeping with him and his boyfriend. I refuse, however. A decision I'll probably regret for the rest

of my life.

The next day I stop by the downtown offices of *El Vibora*. Across the room a lone artist is making a drawing of Fat Freddy's Cat. At first I think it's one of Gilbert Shelton's many European imitators. Then, José-Maria comes in and introduces us; it's the real creator of *The Fabulous Freak Brothers* himself. We all go out to lunch.

Over plates of steamed squid with a garlic butter sauce, we have the following conversation. Gilbert Shelton says:

"If you are going to write about this, remind your readers that Fat Freddy's Cat is on trial in England for conspiracy to deprave and corrupt; they are trying to extend the obscenity law beyond sexuality to include drug-related literature; like my books, *HIGH TIMES*, even *Junky* and *all* the *How to Grow* information. My publisher, Tony Bennett, faces fourteen years in jail. Here in Spain José-Maria published my books. They are very popular and there are no police problems; there's no restriction of press freedom here."

"Look, Gilbert. You've lived in Barcelona. What do you think the yin/yang of this city is?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I believe each city has a unique consciousness that might be expressed as opposites. In Paris it's sensuality and cynicism; in Berlin sentimentality and aggression, in London lies and boredom, in Amsterdam commerce and coziness. What is the yin/yang of Barcelona?"

"The cold, cruel anarchy of the state," Gilbert says slowly. "And the warm, strong family. But the new socialist government gives a lot of support to comic artists here: it's a bold assertion of national pride. There's a big exhibition in a bank you should see. It's called '1984 x 20,'" he says wistfully, as if wishing such things could happen in America.

The exhibit is in an 18th-century stone building owned by the Bank Caixa (pronounced kasha), the cultural Mafia in Catalonia. In another part of town they are presenting an important Marcel Duchamp exhibition. Previous shows in this prestigious space include Jasper Johns, the Italian Trans-avant-garde and the pride of Catalan modernism, Joan Miró.

"The public didn't think it's art," the curator Josep Sola Rios tells me, "because it has been printed. But many people come and they see the relationship between art and comics them-

selves. Drawing is the most ancient, modern, difficult and cheapest form of expression in the world.

"I presented the bank with a project book without thinking that they would accept it, but they did and gave seven million pesetas for the show. From Barcelona it goes to Valencia and Madrid, the rest we are talking about. If we cover the costs, we have the possibility of doing the same thing for foreign artists."

It is one of the best figurative art shows I've seen in years, more powerful by far than the *Zeitgeist* exhibit in Berlin. Certainly. The walls are surrounded by large, framed originals of the 20 artists represented. In the center of the hall are glass cases showing off various forms these Spanish artists have used—postcards, album covers, a conspicuously beautiful one by Cee-sepe (it will take *Vanity Fair* at least a year to "discover" him); many magazine covers, plastic bags (two by the Barcelona artist Mariscal, whose work is published in the States by *Raw* magazine of New York); posters, of course, and advertisements.

At one side of the installation there's a continuous showing of a 30-minute video of all the artists, arranged alphabetically. Each one chose his own music; the Talking Heads, Buddy Holly, Chinese music, Spanish folk songs, Frank Sinatra singing "one for the lady, another for the road," and with Mariscal's performance "hey mista/would ya like to meet my sista . . . /hey, Juanita," Marcarmen stabs a blue balloon; all of it silly, but attractively so.

Josep, the curator, hands me a handsomely printed catalog of the exhibition; it's in full color, printed on heavy-coated glossy paper, with the text in Spanish, Catalan and English. An absolute must for any serious comic-book fan. He says:

"Let me introduce you to Calonge, one of the artists from the exhibition."

Calonge, 25, is standing in front of one of his paintings. In the background we see a couple sitting on bar stools having an intense affectionate flirt; but, in the foreground we see a large gun pointed at the couple. The meeting is not a disappointment: Calonge, true to his art, is as deliriously paranoid as his paintings.

Later, Elaine says, "The Catalans are Phoenicians. They are exotic, like the Jews, but without the greed. *Verguenza*, shame, is a word often heard." Elaine is an old friend, a singer, songwriter and poet. We have touched base

at Zeleste (Calle Plateria 5), the place in Barcelona where the new-wave and jazz scenes meet. She continues:

"Under Franco they couldn't speak Catalan, so they sang it. When you have music to it, you add another dimension to the experience. The Catalans tell you: 'We are Europeans'; that is, not niggers like the rest of Spain."

Both Elaine and I have early morning appointments in the Barrio Gotica. We find a cheap 1,000-pesetas pension, make affectionate, albeit nonpassionate love. Elaine is as plump as a delicious dumpling, and I must admit that I like to have a fat woman, occasionally. Although my personal preference is for muscular pocket amazons, when in Barcelona, etc., etc. And Mediterranean men are famous for their desire for big mamas, bubble yum yums.

Bright and early the next morning I present myself at City Hall. Have I told you? Spain, of all places, has decriminalized possession of cannabis. The Socialist majority in the Cortes, the parliament, did it legislatively in the summer of '83. In Barcelona there is smoking everywhere; in almost all the restaurants and cafes I've been in someone is rolling up.

My appointment here is with officials of the Department of Youth and Sports, the subsection of the Service for Information and Orientation with Delinquents, Marginals, Drug Dependencies and Sexuality. Quite a mouthful, eh?

I am led into a conference room by Laura Fernandez and Inma Mayols, psychologists specializing in youth work, two Catalan yuppies, progressive Europeans who know that to be elegant it doesn't matter what you wear as long as one's haircut and accessories are perfect. Both are formally friendly and a little bit curious, if not suspicious of what I'm doing there.

"What is the new law?" I ask. "And how was it changed last summer?"

"Like other countries of Europe," they tell me proudly, "to consume marijuana is not illegal. The new modification in law makes a distinction between heavy and light damage to health. In the '60s smoking was limited to special people. Now it is not marginal, because it is not illegal behavior."

"But," I protest, "look here at the law; it's still illegal to traffic, grow or manufacture marijuana or hashish. It also bans organizations to spread drug use; or, those who promote or make it easy to consume. It says here that if there is dealing in public places, the place will be closed. There's not even a minimum

amount specified for own use."

"Yes. There is a big ambiguity between traffic and own use, also over growing. It is not a correct law, but there is an advantage: the consumer is not punished—the social consequence is that it doesn't make them marginal."

Faced with condemning a whole generation as villainous criminals merely because they smoke pot, or decriminalizing cannabis consumption, countries like Holland and Spain have made the clever, nonconfrontational choice.

"It might not make the consumer marginal," I answer. "But, restrictions on farming and trade make the stuff you can score low grade. What is the government doing to improve the quality?"

"The quality of hashish in Barcelona depends on market forces. Cheap stuff, because there is not much money here."

Not to be put off, I press on with a stress question, one that is at the heart of Barcelona's future. It concerns the role of newly awakened Catalan consciousness. Since books like Schumacher's *Small Is Beautiful*, and Mike Zwerin's *The Balkanization of Practically Everything*, liberal orthodoxy has been sentimentally inclined to support separatist movements like the Basques, the Corsicans, SWAPO or the PLO.

Under Franco, the Catalans were severely repressed, and like all things vital they flourished under repression. Their language was forbidden, to the point of making it illegal to put a Catalan name on a birth certificate. And now, under king and socialism, there has been a political and cultural Catalan revival, yet one full of cunning contradictions. As someone said to me: "In my town the fascists came in 1939, they lined up the local anarchist leaders and shot them. Now, the grandchildren of the anarchists have gone to Barcelona to become apolitical professional careerists; the grandchildren of the fascists have stayed on and become functionaries in the new Catalan Nationalist party, and their strong cultural apparatus."

Not only did George Orwell write 1984, but also *Homage to Catalonia*, so it's propitious that the first broadcast of the Catalan television channel—on New Year's Day, 1984—included an appeal to parents and children to inform the police about each other's drug use. When I ask about this, Laura and Inma of City Hall appear surprised, even embarrassed I know about this,

as if I had noticed a lapse in their table manners. They confer quickly with each other, in Catalan. Then reply, in measured words:

"We, of the city government, don't always agree with the state. We were angered and embarrassed by the Catalan Generalitat. That program was made by an opportunist company, made in a precipitate way, to influence the elections this April. [By the way, the Catalan Nationalist party won an absolute majority in the state legislature.] It is alarmist. It does not inform."

When Inma leaves the room to get me some pamphlets, I turn quickly to Laura, who seems like the more relaxed of the two, and ask in a conspiratorial whisper:

"Hey, do you smoke?"

Looking around to make sure we are alone, she says, "Well . . ."

"Well, do you?"

"Do you?"

"Of course. Almost every day for twenty-five years. Now, and you?"

"Yes . . . sometimes," she admits finally.

This town has always had a certain magic for me, together with Naples and Haifa it is one of my favoritely located Mediterranean ports. The enchantment was always there; what it lacked was the creative essentialism that exists here now, I think, sitting with Elaine at a cafe on the Plaza Real.

Nearby, a young man wearing a cheap brown suit is sitting on the ground, leaning against one of the many pillars surrounding this square. I notice the sleeve of his jacket is rolled up, revealing six or seven newly sewn slashes, and one freshly opened one; it's a cut almost to the bone. He is sitting in a pool of blood, and smiling. A crowd gathers. One voice: "He's cut himself with a tin can; he's done it four or five times before." Another voice: "Why complicate my life?" Ten armed policemen and an ambulance appear; he is taken away, still smiling. The last cop to leave is on a motorcycle. Before roaring off he turns to the crowd and with a flourish offers a philosophical justification: "That's the Plaza!" Someone throws sand on the pool of blood, just as they do at bullfights here.

Our next stop is the Café de Opera, the oldest cafe in Barcelona, on the Ramblas and not far from either the Oriente Hotel where Orwell wrote about the downfall of Barcelona's anarchist government of the '30s, or from no. 33 where Cervantes finished *Don Quixote*.

"It's a place to score," Elaine says.

Indeed, it is. As we pass through I am offered a dozen deals, and for once I don't regret refusing. Almost as soon as we are seated I start to roll a joint and the police come in busting everyone sitting in the front. While the police line them all up in the back alley and check papers, we slip out the front door. A plainclothes cop, disguised as a shoe-shine boy, is looking at the floor where the dealers were sitting to see if anyone dropped their stash.

Sitting in the seat behind me, on the last train back to La Floresta, a couple are openly smoking hash from a pipe. He is wearing a black leather jacket; she has that new-wave babydoll existentialist look.

The next morning I discover this couple are also guests of my host, José-Maria. They slept in another part of the villa. He turns out to be Pons, one of *El Vibora's* star-studded cast of comic illustrators.

I ask: "What do you think about the support the government is giving to dissenting comic artists, like the exhibition '1984 x 20'?"

"That curator, I hate him; I'll smash his face. Everyone from *El Vibora* is there but me. It's a shame."

Later, when Pons calms down, we speak about more personal matters. He says:

"White powder, that's the problem: it's a vampire grabbing at the throat. I like a little heroin. Everything in this world is good, if you're careful. Five years ago, it was cheaper in Amsterdam. No more. In Barcelona now a gram of coke costs 10,000 pesetas, horse is 20,000."

Here I had wanted to tell you about a Catalanian pagan mystery I was privileged to attend, a festival of Pan, where I performed the *Sardana*, a springground dance, a dance that was illegal under Franco. But this would involve a discussion about the adoration of desire, the holy bean, and whether the pig or the lamb was the first non-human sacrificial meat: topics perhaps best left to another time, folks!

The day before I am to leave, Elaine plans a little party. She picks me up with a taxi at the Bar Zurich Café, Plaza de Catalunya, and we drive about 25 miles outside Barcelona. The countryside is a patchwork of new industrial parks and the first pink flowers of ancient almond orchards. Elaine lives in Esparreguera (Asparagus), a village of 10,000 souls lying at the foot of Montserrat. / continued on page 96



TOY

**The days of playing
catch-up with the West
are over, as witnessed by
this tale of the far-out
East. Story by
Jeff Spurrier, photos
by Ann Summa.**

On a pleasant Sunday afternoon in the Harajuku district of Tokyo, Yoko, a part-time office worker, squats down in the shade of the Yoyogi Youth Center and slaps a cassette tape into a massive ghetto blaster sitting on its back on the pavement. She is dressed entirely in tight black leather with the name of her dance troupe — The Rockers — stitched on the back of her jacket.

"My fellow workers at the office don't know I do this," the 20-year-old says with a laugh. "They wouldn't understand if I told them. They would think I was crazy."

She smiles as the first wild strains of Chuck Berry's "Maybelline" come raging through the speakers. Quickly her friends gather around and within 30 seconds the entire Rockers group is twisting and gyrating crazily in a rock 'n' roll frenzy.

Their dancing is barely noticed by bystanders, for The Rockers is just one group out of several thousand dancers that crowd the Harajuku streets on Sundays. Within a 100-foot radius there are no less than 20 separate groups of dancers, all done up in their respective colors, all thrashing wildly to a cacophony of '50s American rock classics spewn out from dozens of huge cassette players.

A few blocks away, on the third floor of the trendy Laforet Building, a pair of college girls wander into a boutique that features the Sonoichi fashion line of Akiko Sakai-zumi. One of the girls picks up an object that catches her fancy: a Day-Glo pink purse made out of a shoe. And not just any shoe — this one has brightly painted human-like toes sewn onto the end.

Seeing the price she changes her mind and settles on a more reasonable accessory: a moss green belt whose design is highlighted by the presence of a fist-sized rubber Godzilla.





● *McSushi? Japan struggles to integrate the demands of the future with the claims of its past.*

Farther up Meiji Street, on the fourth floor of a building that overlooks Hara-juku, Yojino, a 19-year-old fashion student wearing flashy makeup, is getting his hair cut at Hair People. In the corner of the small salon other customers wait, leafing through copies of *Brutus*, *Pop-eye* and *Mono* (these are highly popular consumer-oriented magazines with a very great impact on what's bought and sold in Tokyo stores) while watching X perform "This Must Be the New World" on a video player.

Today Yojino is just getting his pig-tails trimmed by Tetsuo, a young man who sports a furry-hand outline shaved on the back of his head.

Tsuchida Hidenori, one of the Hair People haircutters, watches as Yojino brushes off his shirt and begins to re-apply his makeup.

"Outrageous hair styles started here about two years ago," says Tsuchida. "I think that fashion and music have made their own culture in Japan. Some people shave their heads. That shows they are thinking. But if you have strange hair it's hard to work in the ordinary world. If you go to Otemachi [the financial district of Tokyo], all you

see are businessmen with the same suits, the same hair style. I think it's strange. All young people think so.

"We present a new idea," he adds. "The kids today want some new hair fashion like they want new videos. The videos are the software. They see the videos and get ideas. We don't want to follow fashion. We want to make it."

A few miles away, outside the east exit of Shinjuku Station, a trio of young boys stand in a circle, oblivious of the thousands of Sunday travelers that pour past. Their eyes are glazed and a stupid dazed smile flickers on the face of each. Slowly they pass around a clear plastic bag that holds a huge ball of wet glue in the bottom. Only a few in the crowds bother to give them a second look.

Of more interest is a 90-foot square TV screen suspended high above the sidewalk opposite the station exit. A newscaster is reading the news, detailing the latest outbreak of teenage violence in junior high schools. Yet another incident of disaffected youth attacking a teacher has occurred in what has become an alarming trend.

In the 1960s the first full-blown youth culture came into bloom as thousands of kids got the message that it was time to put flowers in their hair and head for San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury. Ten years later London was the place to be, as spiky mohawks, safety-pin accessories and "antisocial" outrage came into vogue. These days the scene has shifted East (or West, depending on your perspective) to the capital of what some see as the world's first true 21st-century country: Japan.

Despite their reputation as being cultural chameleons, able to mimic the style of scenes from all over the globe, young Japanese are in the process of creating what may be the first real international culture—a hodgepodge of high-tech and high-touch, a blending of the best of East and West into a format as digestible and exotic as deep-fried tofu.

Ryuichi Sakamoto, one of the members of the pop group Yellow Magic Orchestra, has a metaphor for Japanese rock musicians that might easily apply to the modern culture as a whole.

"Imagine that at some time in the future the earth became uninhabitable



and people from all over the world were sent to space stations capable of holding tens of millions of people," he says. "You would then have a situation where cultures and habits of every country would be broken down and re-constructed into a culture that was acceptable to all assembled there—no matter where they came from. What the Japanese are doing at the moment is somewhat similar to that."

The process is not all smooth sailing, of course. As youthful innovators struggle to create a new aesthetic, conservative social commentators lament the gradual loss of Japan's classic feudal past. While "Graffiti-zoku" (*zoku* means "tribe") street dancers rock away in Harajuku, plainclothes policemen tour the crowds, pulling aside underage kids for brazenly smoking cigarettes.

For the first time since the Vietnam War era, Japanese authorities have a reason to worry about the younger generation. These days the problem is violence—specifically, attacks against teachers by junior and senior high-school students. Since 1975 incidents of violence toward teachers have quadrupled.

"When violence happens it's usually in the junior high schools because once kids are in high school they have to start studying all the time to get into college and they don't have time to beat up their teachers," says Jimmy Nelson, an editor for *Brutus* magazine.

The point is well taken. Japanese teenagers know that entrance into a college or university means job security in the future. To fail to pass the all-important university entrance exam can be a devastating blow. The "exam hell" that lies at the end of all high-school students' careers has been credited with the rising tide of teenage suicides.

For some teenagers security is less important than developing a form of Japanese cool—being *tsupari*. *Tsupari* means that one is socially cold or trashy. It is often used when describing teenage girls who get pregnant or young boys with a fondness for glue or paint-thinner sniffing.

That's right, glue sniffing. Believe it or not, this appears to be young Japan's drug of choice—the reason being that in Japan the use of even the most innocuous "recreational" drugs is frowned upon. Although marijuana grows wild in fields in the northern part of the country (where it was used as a source of hemp for years), the locations of



● *Ryuichi Sakamoto of YMO.*

the fields are well known by police, and suspicious cars full of young people on late-night harvesting raids are watched for.

Even for the foreign visitor who enjoys a casual toke with friends the situation is not without legal risk. Confession of one's guilt is a particularly Japanese trait, one that easily leads to a situation that is known as "potato picking." When one person is arrested for drug use, he freely offers the names of all the persons he knows who are involved in illegal activity—the other potatoes on the vine. Because of the stiff penalties for possession of marijuana (between four and 10 years for natives, and deportation for foreigners), most young Japanese curious about grass prefer to do their toking outside of the country—frequently on surfing trips to Hawaii or Bali.

A safer sort of emotional outlet for Japanese kids is music. The present generation of Japanese have grown up listening to western styles of popular music, from heavy metal to reggae, Kentucky bluegrass to space-age dub, rap, scratch, funk, folk, experimental, fusion, boogie rock, pop rock. You name it. Just about every form of music which is found in the West is ultimately available (on stage or on vinyl) in Tokyo. In addition there are also purely Japanese forms of music which also find fans among the young.

While rock music is incredibly popular among Japanese high-school and college students, in terms of sales the most successful form of pop music is *kayokyoku*, a sugary blend of upbeat lyrics, predictable chord changes and stiff disco-style dance routines dished up by an interchangeable crew of would-be "idol singers." Some 400

new "stars" are debuted every year by production houses who package the singers (choosing everything from their clothes to the songs they sing, their dance routines and their overall image). Fortunately, most of them are gone within six months. And even for the most successful *kayokyoku* singer, a long career runs only a few years.

"Japan has always been a young record-buying market," says Peter Barakan, a young Englishman who works with YMO and hosts a new music video program on Japanese TV. "There's this phenomenon where the kids get out of school, go to college and maybe listen to a little jazz or slightly more grown-up music. After college they get a nine to five job, get married and start having babies and stop listening to music altogether aside from what they hear on the TV—which is mostly this teen-idol music."

For those young Japanese whose interest in music does continue beyond the mid-teens, an impressive variety of homegrown talent is available.

At the top of the list is the veteran act Yellow Magic Orchestra who set the Japanese pop-music industry on its ear by emerging as the first true superstar group whose popularity was based on real talent and songwriting ability rather than an image manufactured by a production house. While YMO's sales can't be compared to those of a *kayokyoku* singer like Seiko Matsuda, their influence on the Japanese music scene is enormous. YMO (like Germany's Kraftwerk) was among the first to develop the techno-pop style, a heavily synthesized blend that predated the current rage among trendy British acts.

Unlike many British bands, YMO (and almost all other Japanese pop groups) make music for entertainment, not as an outlet for social commentary. Despite the popularity of American rock 'n' roll in Japan, the music has never taken on the rebellious aspect that it has in the United States.

Ryuichi Sakamoto (who along with Hari Hosono and Yukihiro Takahashi make up YMO) came out of a background of college demonstrations and anti-Vietnam War protests. Still, he admits that the possibility of rock music inciting teenage revolt is almost unthinkable in Japan.

Says Ryuichi Sakamoto: "Why isn't music a force for social expression or change in Japan? Maybe because people have lost their reasons to be angry. For me, certainly, the reasons have

changed somewhat because the power that people are up against, the authority, is so large that they probably feel powerless against it."

Although YMO member Hari Hosono has a reputation for actively supporting dozens of new bands, ultimately he too can't see pop music as being a vehicle for voicing youthful angst.

"I don't believe that music plays that central a role in Japan," he says. "I personally am making music to challenge and stimulate, but I'm not sure just what the reaction is. There is some obvious violence and anxiety going on in Japan now. But it's not the same as the '50s in the United States or the late '70s in England. There are a few groups that have that Punk energy—like [the Punk band] Stalin. They're very violent."

While Punk is not wildly popular in Tokyo, there is a hard-core scene developing, centering around bands like Stalin and Anarchy (pseudo early Clash) and a melange of garage acts that play at the Shibuya club Yaneyura. Spikedos are *de rigueur*, but the aggressive antisocial demeanor common among stateside Punks is not present. Even though they may be Punks, the kids are still Japanese and still polite.

From Stalin to YMO is a wide gap, and in between exist hundreds of bands: EP-4 (synthesized experimental noise), RC Succession (currently riding high with a sound and style based on '70s Rolling Stones), Melon (formerly the Plastics and now playing a form of "tribal city music"), the Southern All Stars (professionally executed straight-ahead rock), Off Course (former folkies gone electric), Salon Music (melodic environmental music), The Roosters (rock), Ippu-Do (with touches of British funk), Logic System (computer music), The Mods (almost early Clash), Bow Wow (heavy metal), Guernica (parody music), Spoil (Tokyo bebop with a rock edge). The list could go on for pages.

Out of all of them, the most promising (in terms of international appeal) is Sandii and the Sunsetz, a quintet that utilizes the rhythm and feel of New Orleans gumbo music with the chunky beat of Okinawan folk music. However weird that may sound, the result is highly listenable and attractive.

There are scores of clubs (called "live houses") in Tokyo where these bands may play, ranging from seedy dives with no ventilation to glitzy high-tech affairs that serve sushi and gourmet snacks. Among the best are Ink Stick,



● *Children of the world's first true 21st-century country.*

the Crocodile, the Loft, the Live Inn, Ruido and Pithecan Thropus Erectus.

While music is important to young Japanese, of equal concern is fashion. In fact, for many musicians and young fashion designers they are simply two sides of the same coin.

Hitomi Ogawa, the head designer for a label called "The Obscure Desire of the Bourgeoisie," says that Tokyo young people live out their dreams through fashion.

"In Tokyo the young people are very rich," she says. "The only exciting

thing in their lives is fashion. Nobody is interested in politics—only fashion."

Fashion indeed has a powerful influence on the Japanese. It was through the designs of a young Hokkaido-born fashion designer, Noritake Otake, that the street dancing in Harajuku got its start over six years ago. His fashion line, Takenoko (which means "bamboo shoot" in Japanese and is a metaphor meaning "younger generation"), quickly caught on with Harajuku kids. Unable to get into nightclubs because of their age, they would dress up in Takenoko-style clothes and dance in

/ continued on page 97

**...And a Happy
New Year**





CULTIVATING THE ALASKAN HIGH WAY

A grower from the north country shares his secrets.

by Ed Rosenthal

Dear Ed,

I have been growing outdoors for three years. A friend of mine "retired" and left me 111 "magic seeds" which he said were a Kush-Oaxacan. The buds mature in late September through early October. The pot tastes like blackberries and is very stony. The first year I grew ten large females which averaged a half-pound. The second year I planted single plants in forest clearings. I left them untrimmed and harvested twelve-to-fifteen-foot giants. Last year I grew sixteen plants in a six-by-eight-foot garden. I pruned the plants when they were about a foot high and then several more times, about every two weeks, with an electric trimmer. The plants only got five feet tall, but they were extremely bushy and had hundreds of small, well-developed buds.

This year I think I am going to be away from the area until late June but I still hope to get in a crop. There

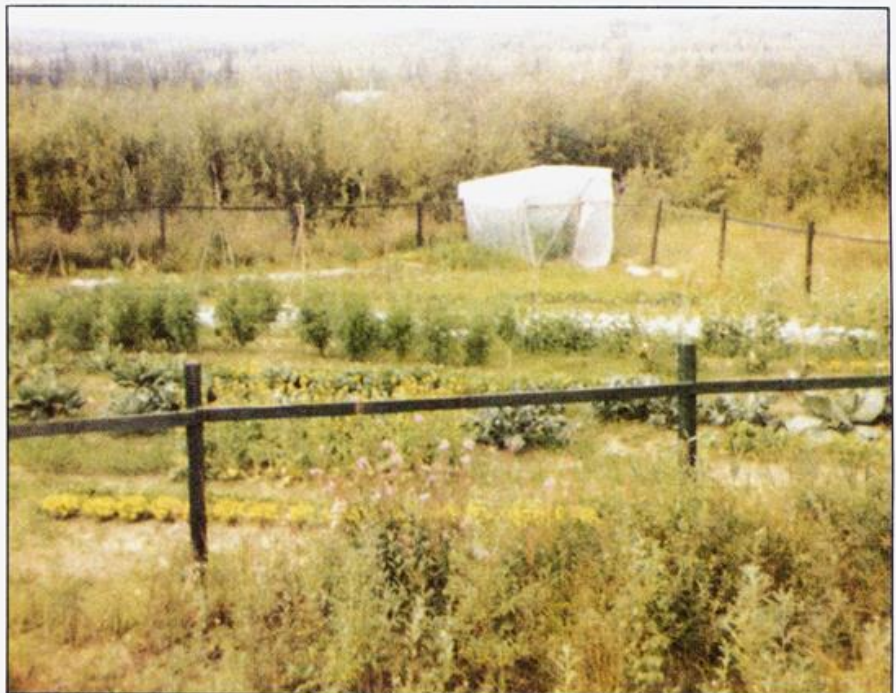
are sixty-eight seeds left and I'd like to use them all this year. I have read in your column where you said that plants could be started later and would not get so big but would mature at normal times. You also mentioned that they could be planted in rows. I sow seed in early July in rows, how far apart should I plant them and how far apart should

the rows be? How will it look from the air?

—The 111 Kid,
Ohio

Plants started in early July will be only three to five feet tall at maturity. If the seeds are to be planted in rows in a field, the seeds could be spaced nine inches apart in rows two feet apart. Double rows, two rows one foot apart and then a two-foot space, can also be used. In early August walk the rows to eliminate the males. (You might try breeding some of the plants if you are running out of seed.)

I have never actually seen a field of late-planted marijuana, but I think that it has a different configuration



● Garden of the Month:

Dear Ed,

In your May column you asked about Alaska's growing conditions. Several hundred miles north of the home of "Matanuska Thunderfuck" lies the Tanana (TAN-uh-na) Valley in the center of Alaska. Being further north, it has longer days, and it also has warmer daytime temperatures in the summer. We are frost free from about Memorial Day to Labor Day with the odd July frost happening occasionally.

About the photo: Note the huge cabbage on the right, just under the fence rail. In the middle distance, on the left, is a stand of about a dozen foot-tall plants; the cool nights (40 to 50 degrees) make for a shorter, bushier plant. The background shows the greenhouse. The plants grown in there were much taller, and very healthy, but all leaf.

Y'see, the problem in Alaskan cultivation isn't temperature or whether giant plants are possible in twenty hours of direct sunlight (I'm sure they are, but I topped mine at the greenhouse limit of nine feet), but instead, what to do about creating the photoperiod necessary for flowering. So, what most serious and/or commercial growers do is rig a light shield of black plastic in their greenhouses, or grow completely indoors in order to give their babies twelve-hour naps. The result is quite good, with bristly, healthy buds available in late August. This also requires supplying some additional heat at either end of our growing season.

If schedules or cash flow prevent any fancy solutions, you can be wonderfully contented with a healthy leaf harvest that goes up in smoke, into brownies or through an alcohol-butter bath to emerge as emerald green THC. It all works and the price is right.

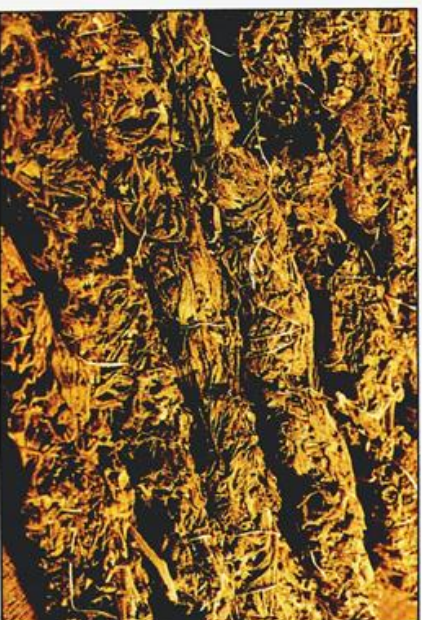
Our legislature is making noises about repeal of growing for personal use. They've already reduced the ambiguous limit of two years ago down to four plants maximum. That, of course, will produce even more revenue for dealers, but maybe that's what the Republicans want. A few weeks ago I spent thirty dollars on three grams of Humboldt sinsemilla; it's the first marijuana I've bought in four years. It was really fine, but I get there just the same with my homegrown. Our fine Tanana Valley BuzzBud holds its own.

—Richard
Fairbanks, Alaska

ASK ED

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June

December

Photography:

Lola "Dinamita" Gonzalez
January

Steve Cooper
September

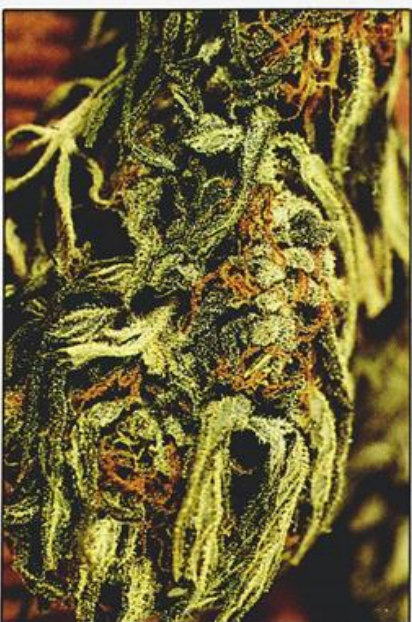
Harlan Ang

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June, July, August, October,
November, December

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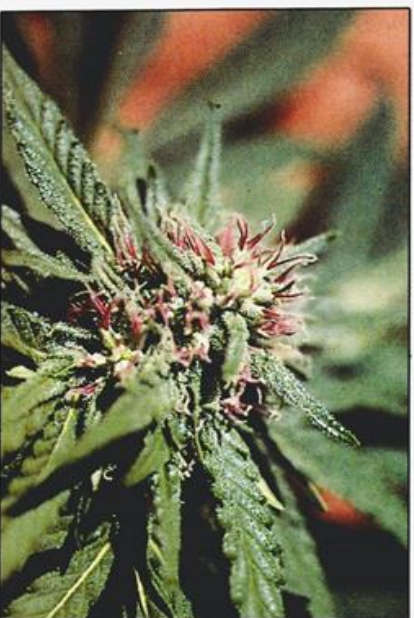
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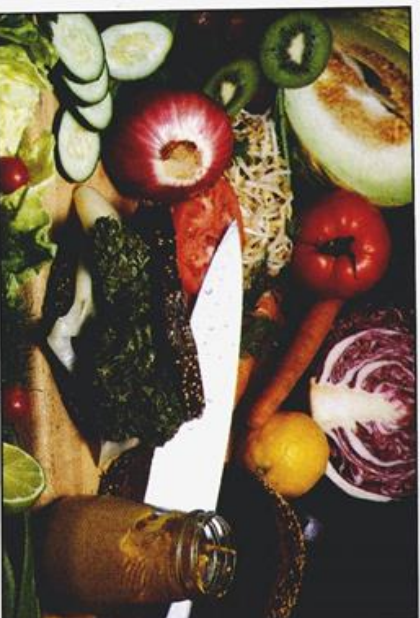
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HIGH TIMES

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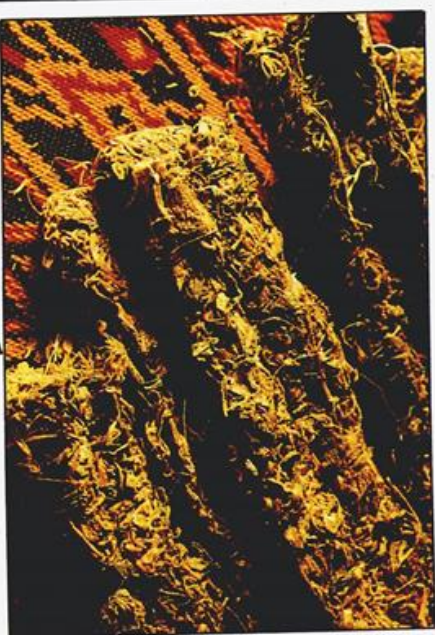


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August

than the large plants which the authorities are taught to look for. The plants are in neat rows, they would not exhibit much branching and they are fairly short. They could probably be harvested mechanically.

Dear Ed,

I found a letter on aspirin and ethylene in one of your past columns quite interesting and plan to try both this season (my sixth).

Recently I saw a show on PBS in which they discussed forcing bromeliads to flower using ethylene. Rather than using commercial preparations, these horticulturists tied the leaves up with string, creating a pocket at the center. They placed a small pouch made of cheesecloth filled with apple peels into the pocket. As the apple peels decompose they give off enough ethylene to induce flowering. I'm planning to place bags of peels all around my garden next time.

Now for some questions.

Should fresh, newly matured seeds be stored for a month or more before attempting germination? Would refrigerating or cooling help?

How many generations need a variety be grown before it is considered "true breeding"?

Since farmers can build up their soil, and since soil in containers can be leached and/or treated, why do so many advisers on growing say to replace potted soil each season? Wouldn't a good program of conditioning help save soil in containers

and therefore save money?

Do spider mites contaminate soil? Can they travel through the air via their webs, or only by direct contact (or by falling/dropping)? If an entire grow room had once been contaminated by spider mites, what cleansing steps should be taken before starting a new crop?

—Prof. T.H. Custer, Chairman

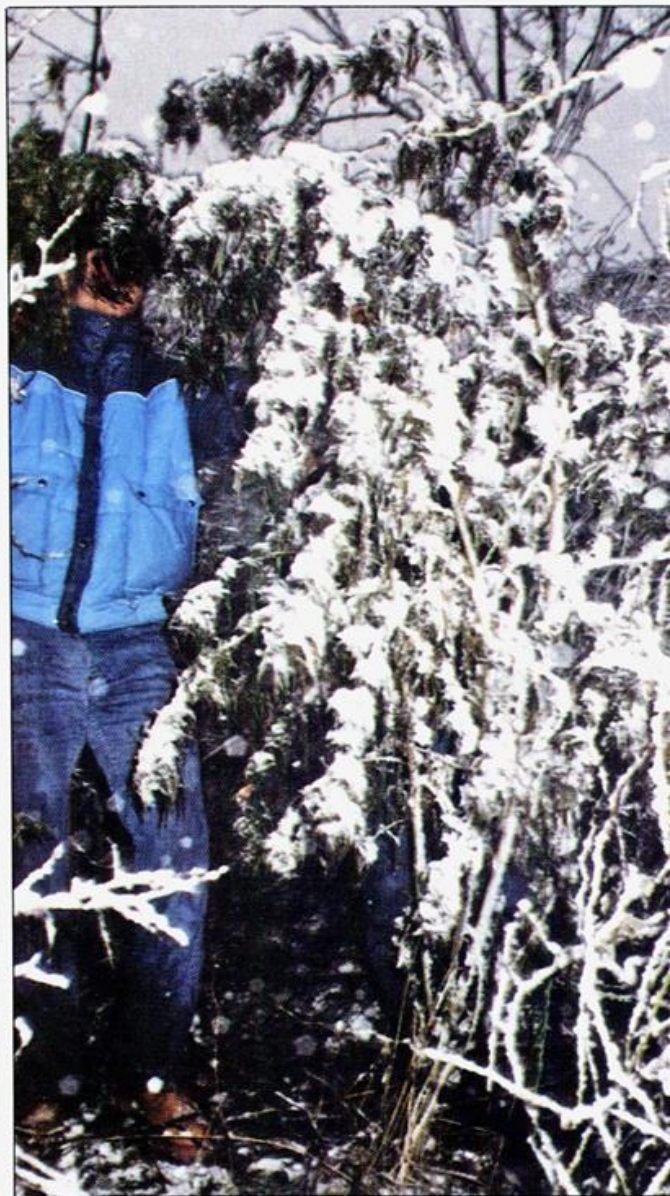
The Homegrowers of Connecticut

Marijuana seeds can be planted as soon as they are mature. They require no waiting period or cold trigger.

Plants that have little variation for two generations are considered true breeding.

Soil used in containers can be reconditioned by leaching it and adding nutrients. The reason that many advisers suggest using new soil is that reconditioning soil is tedious and critical. Too great a buildup of some minerals causes a hard-to-reverse toxic condition. Since the crop is so valuable and soil is relatively inexpensive, the advisers feel the work is not worth the bother.

Spider mites travel by crawling from one plant to another over soil, across leaves and through the air, floating on the webs carried by wind currents. Grow rooms which have been infested with them should be considered contaminated. The containers, medium, floor walls and cracks may all contain the



● **Plant of the Month**, from M&M, Wheeling, W.Va. Pride: "It was a long season this year ('83), but thanks to the late arrival of winter, this bud's fully matured."



● **Bud of the Month**, from King Budeola, Chicago, Ill.: "I've been growing cannabis for two years and have had my best results using a metal halide lamp and hydroponic unit. I used to use dirt, but found that plants grown hydroponically grow about three times faster!"

pests or their eggs. To clean the room, wash it down using a 5 percent bleach solution (one cup per gallon) or 5 percent ammonia solution (do not use the two together, they produce toxic fumes). Make sure to clean cracks and crevices. Containers and hydroponic systems should be washed and rinsed or heated to steaming using a conventional oven or microwave, but it is usually easier to replace it with new material. □

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PROTECTING YOUR PLANTS

Expert advice on how to eliminate garden pests

by Don Jackson

Walking into your grow room one day, you notice that something about your plants doesn't seem quite right. They might be yellowed, with leaves turning speckled and brown. Looking closer, you notice hoards of tiny, almost microscopic critters crawling among fine webbing all over the leaves. You frantically check with some books or a knowledgeable friend, and you discover that you have *spider mites*. There's nothing like seeing the damage these pests can

cause. Left untreated, your plants will soon brown and then... die.

While spider mites are the most likely pest to invade your patch (especially indoors and in greenhouses), there are many others to deal with as well—including aphids, whiteflies, thrips and mealybugs. A bad case of these pests doesn't just happen overnight, however, even though it might

seem like it. They start out with just one or two, later a small colony, then you're infested. New generations will spring up every one or two weeks. Most people, though, will only see them when they're poised for the final attack. It's a good idea to check your plants weekly, with a 10-power magnifier. By getting to really know your plants, you'll spot these pest infestations early, in plenty of time to plan a strategy.

If you're like most people, the first thing you want to know after finding one of these pests is "What can I spray it with?" True, this is what much of the "modern" farm and chemical-company advice would lead you to believe. However, this approach leads to increasing problems because the pests eventually become immune to the common sprays. This immunity occurs even faster in a protected indoor tropical environment, i.e., a greenhouse. Indoors, pesticide residues take longer to break down, too, so you're exposed to their dangers even longer than outside. Soon, you're using more and more poison sprays, the pests appear to thrive on the stuff, and you're subjecting yourself and others to some very harmful chemicals.

Fortunately, there are some safe alternative ways for controlling most of these insect and mite pests. *Biological controls* include the many good bugs out there that help keep the bad bugs under control. Probably the best known biological control is the common ladybug beetle. Ladybugs, and especially their larvae, have huge appetites for aphids, and eat several other pests as well. In the case of spider mites, there are other mites called predator mites which eat the spiders but not the plants, and thrive in the process. Whiteflies are controlled naturally by a miniature wasp that lays its eggs inside the whiteflies' young. (No, they don't sting, and they're about the size of a pinhead.) Mealybugs are preyed on by an

Australian ladybug (not the normal kind found here). These biological pest controls and many others are available from mail-order suppliers, usually year round. We'll discuss using these good bugs to control the bad ones in more detail a little farther on.

While some of these insects are relatively new to the pest-control scene, others have been used for over 50 years. Though they were at one time almost abandoned, grow-



● *Adult Phytoseius longipes predator*

ers have been returning to them recently, after experiencing failures with pesticides. There are many important differences between the two. A key element for most biological controls is catching the bad guys at an early stage—this isn't an instant cure, and needs time to work. You need to identify the pests in order to find the proper natural controls, and you might need to alter the temperature or humidity to suit their needs. You also need to recognize that a few of any given pest aren't likely to harm your plants, so long as natural forces are there to keep them down to those low levels. Plants can tolerate low levels of pests with no loss in yield; in fact, in some cases yields have even somewhat improved. Pest control takes on a whole new perspective of *cooperation* with nature, rather than trying to wipe it all out.

What can you do if you don't see these pests on your plants until there are hoards of the little devils? If you decide to use pesticides such as



● *A mealy bug colony along a leaf stem.*

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Malathion or Kelthane, you won't be able to use most biological controls until a month or two later—the residue takes that long to break far enough down for them to survive (and at this point it's too late for them to work anyway). There are, though, three types of sprays which are not harmful to use, work on most pests, and leave no harmful residue.

Soap, added to water at the rate of one tablespoon per gallon, can be sprayed right on the plant. Fels Naptha and Ivory Soap Flakes are very effective. Soap sprays work by clogging the pores of the pests and have no residual action after they're dry. And "insecticidal soap" made from fatty diglycerides is also available, but not as effective as regular



• eating an egg.

soaps, according to the California Department of Agriculture. Soap sprays don't kill all pests, and leave most eggs unharmed, so they must be sprayed on a regular basis. There is one potential drawback to soap sprays: when the flowering process begins, don't use the soap on the buds or else they'll taste soapy.

Pyrethrum is a natural insecticide found in chrysanthemum-family plants. As far as is known, it is harmless to warm-blooded animals. It is effective on many insects and pests and comes either as a powder, liquid or spray, available at most nurseries. It breaks down after about six hours' exposure to sunlight, so it's quite safe to use.

Some growers use sprays containing herbs and spices. Garlic, cayenne, tobacco and onion have all been used to make sprays. Many organic gardening books have recipes for these.

Sprays are more effective when they are used in rotation so that the pests do not have a chance to de-

velop an immunity to any one kind. They are good tools for lowering the population levels of pests before adding biological controls.

Now, hopefully, you've been watching your plants from the start and you've just spotted the first signs of a pest invasion. Or perhaps you caught it late, but now you've got it slowed down. Let's look at some of these pests, their biological controls, and the conditions they need to work in.

Spider Mites—You almost need a magnifying glass to see these guys unless you really look hard. It's sometimes easier to spot their damage—pinpoint brown or tan spots on the tops of leaves. They feed by puncturing plant cells, then by licking up the juices—this is what causes the speckling on the leaves. They're usually on the bottom sides of the leaves, later on you'll see them everywhere. Laying their eggs among the webbing, they go from egg to adult in about two weeks. Spider mites like hot and dry conditions, so anything you can do to cool things down and raise the humidity will help keep them down, too.

Predator Mites are the good mites that eat spider mites. They need fairly high humidity to do well (60–90 percent). If your area isn't that humid, try watering your plants more, misting them, sprinkling the floor, or anything else that gets more moisture in the air. There are different varieties of these predator mites. For damp greenhouses that stay under 80°, try *Phytoseius persimilis*. (Sorry, they don't have common names for these!) For indoors and in greenhouses that get up to 85–90°, *Amblyseius californicus* seems best, and *Phytoseius longipes* is good for temperatures

warmer than that. A mixture of predators often works better than one kind by itself. Use one predator for every 20–25 spider mites (count a few leaves for an estimate), with good conditions the infestation should level off in three or four weeks. If the predators run out of spider mites to eat, they turn cannibalistic and die off.

Whiteflies—You'll know you have whiteflies when you see little white things come fluttering out after the leaves are rustled or the plant watered. With big infestations, whole flocks come flying out. While the adult flies are what you first notice, the worst damage is done by their young. These look like little greenish-clear scales stuck on the plant, and they feed by sucking plant juices. This feeding damage would be bad enough, but the honeydew excrement from all those scales sucking away causes the growth of a black sooty mold that finally chokes off the plant. Whiteflies do best at 65–75°, but they survive over a wide range.

Plants infested with whiteflies should be misted occasionally to wash off the mold and mildew. You can trap whiteflies, and/or use parasites to be rid of them. To trap them you can buy or make some yellow sticky traps. Whiteflies are attracted to the color yellow, and when yellow cards are hung around the plants and coated with a sticky substance many of the adults can be trapped out. (Use vaseline, mineral oil or some such combination.) If whiteflies are a continuous problem, try the parasitic wasp *Encarsia formosa*. These parasites lay their eggs inside whitefly scales, and their offspring then develop on the scale, killing it in the process.

/ continued on page 88



• An aphid colony.



Illustration by Bob Guglielmo

■ The harvest was in and the first twenty pounds had been cut, cleaned and cured. Chris and Billie were tossing back Heinekens in celebration, but Maxwell knew the hardest part was yet to come. Part Two.

Outlaws in Babylon

FICTION BY STEVE CHAPPLE

RETURN TO MAXWELL'S HIDEAWAY: Maxwell Turns a Catholic Mass into a Shocking and Is Knocked Flat on his Back by a Sledgehammer; The Horse People Writhe on their Beds at the Colorado State Mental Hospital; SAVAK Takes off Another Grower; The First Shipment of the Season Meets an Unexpected Roadblock

Back down the big road, 101, at Maxwell's hideaway cabin, Carol and Billie were packing the cleaned quarter-pounds in Seal-a-Meal as Maxwell and I came over the hill. One thing has gone unsaid this day at the hideaway ranch. *Maxwell does not sleep with the plants.* Maxwell sleeps in motels. You may see this as hierarchy. If you are one of Maxwell's partners, you may resent this nightly defection. Maxwell would not care what you think. He used to sleep with the plants. He slept beside the fields for years. In the morning he chewed Alka-Seltzers before breakfast. At lunch he dissolved Alka-Seltzers in his Coca-Cola. At night he ate Alka-Seltzers for dinner. His stomach hurt. It hurt a lot. Bravado, you recall, is for vets who sleep with four guns. Maxwell only sleeps with one now, and he prefers to sleep in motels. The plan tonight is to eat dinner and leave with the first 20 pounds of the season. These 20 pounds of sinsemilla are worth from \$1,700 to \$2,500 a pound depending on the deals Maxwell makes, so Carol and Billie do not complain that they will be sleeping with the

rest of the plants tonight. They don't have the connections to move this kind of weight and Maxwell does. That's another reason why Maxwell gets to sleep in motels.

But Maxwell is more than a businessman. Maxwell is Maxwell.

In a second he can see that the cleaning, sorting, weighing and packing is proceeding to perfection.

And so he starts goofing.

"Drink up. Drink up," he says, "your Maxwell needs those bottles. I require those bottles!"

Maxwell wants us to finish our Heinekens, and as we guzzle at record pace, he sticks a candle down their green muzzles and plants them like glowing flowerpots in every nook and cranny, shelf and stove surface in the old cottage. Soon there are six, a dozen, 20 candles flickering in the little cabin.

"Catholic mass!" shouts Max, who is anything but Catholic. "Catholic mass!"

It is a boyish thing to do and Maxwell is a boy. The cabin, which was dark 20 minutes ago, is now aglow like the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We can all smell the wax. No longer are we hunkered down in a crummy drying room during harvest season, the ceiling festooned with hanging marijuana like mistletoe, automatic-weapons fire sounding across the ravine, and the narcos only waiting until first light before the final fly-over and the landing of the helicopters.

Maxwell takes the edge off the paranoia, and that's another reason why he's

the boss. He controls reality even when we all know reality has a way of escaping control.

The little cottage is lit now like an old-time Colorado carny show. Not Denver, not Colorado Springs. He's talking weird now—talking Durango, the San Juans, Telluride, miners, Silverton, talking turn-of-the-century because Maxwell's people go way back.

Maxwell cracks open one of the large, expensive ice chests that holds the Heinekens. He's cooled the beers in dry ice. He pries out a chunk of dry ice and juggles it from palm to palm. Whoa! It's hot. He tries to pretend it's not.

"Here, Carol," says Max.

Carol won't touch it.

He drops it in Billie's hands. Billie lets out a howl. At first dry ice is cold like regular ice and then so quickly you don't have time to drop it, it turns as hot as fire.

Maxwell laughs. He gingerly takes back the ice, with his fingernails, and drops it into the cooler.

"Reminds me of the shocking," says Max. He raises his eyebrows, little smiles all over his face. Story coming...

"Last time I did a shocking," says Maxwell, "it was my fourteenth birthday. All these kids were downstairs at my house. Someone took a lamp, cut off the cord and stripped the wire back four inches or so. Then everybody held hands, maybe ten people in a circle holding onto the bare wire. You put the plug in the socket. Now the electricity is making a circuit, but with ten kids we felt only a pleasant buzz. The charge became stronger and stronger as kids dropped off. Ten, nine, eight, seven, you know, until there was just me and this other guy, and we were both receiving a hell of a surge. I could hardly take it. My jaw is actually clamping. I can see the muscles knotting across his face. The other kid finally lets go. I thought I'd won. Then the kid looks at me. He's smiling. He reaches out with his index finger and touches me right square between the eyes."

"What happened?" Billie asks.

"I fucking fell over backwards like I'd been struck by a sledgehammer."

"What happened to the other kid?"

"He just smiled. He was cool."

"No, I mean what happened to him later?"

"You mean, whatever happened to him?"

"Yeah."

"He died in Thailand. They did an autopsy and they said they found cocaine in his asshole. Can you believe that? Who ever died from coke?"

"The guy who shocked you?"

"His name was Scooter Rydell," says Maxwell. A gentle smile comes across his mouth. It lasts only a second. "I loved that guy," says Maxwell. And then a soft smile breaks open. "You know where I was the morning of that fourteenth birthday, before the party? I was in the Colorado State Mental Hospital. No shit. My father was the state attorney general."

The mental hospital was old and enormous. Maxwell was at the end of the tour. He was a little afraid to be along in the first place. He forgot what he was doing, and all of a sudden, his worst fear came true. He was lost.

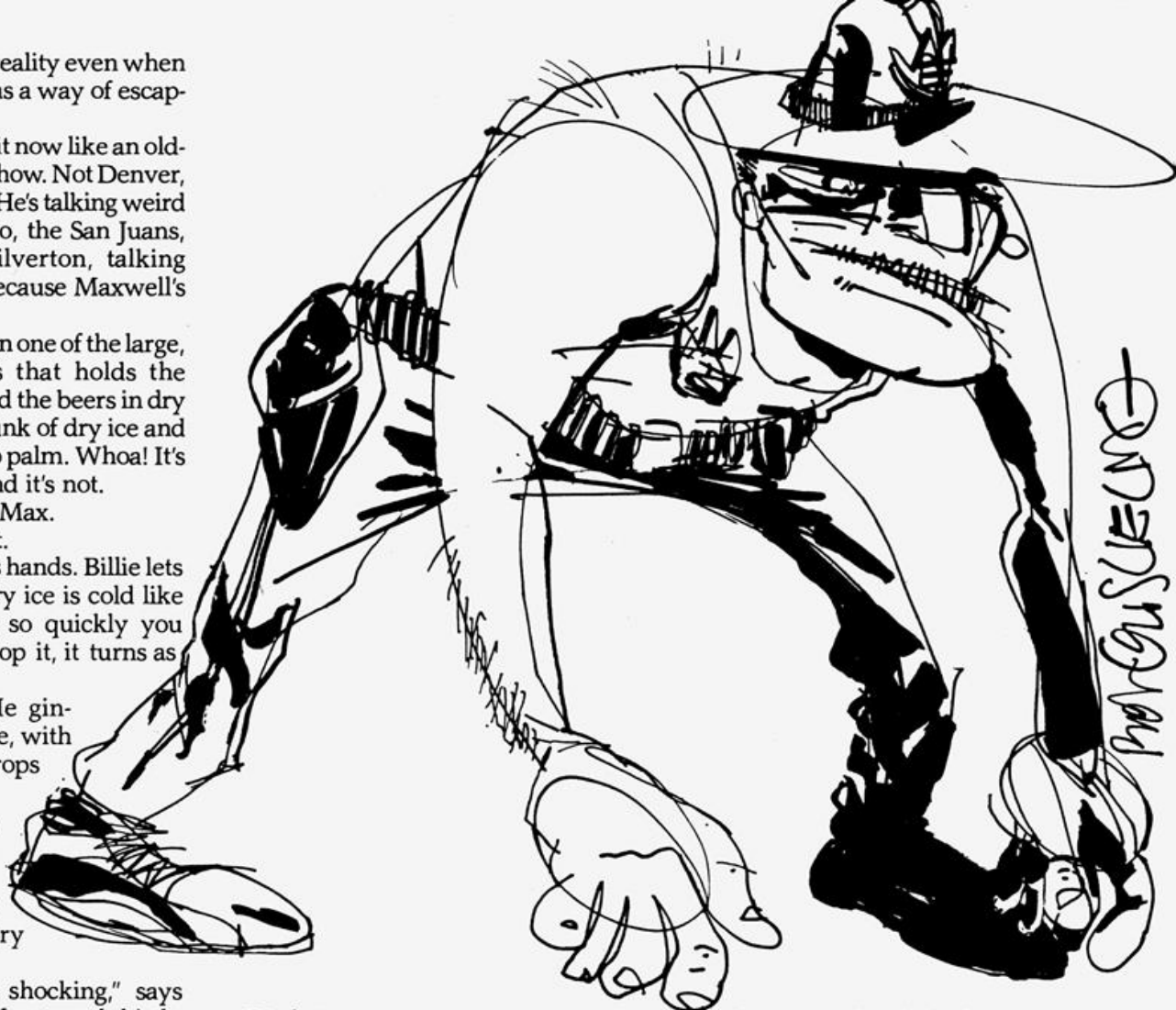
"I'm, like, opening door after door, trying to get back to the tour, and this place is fucking cavernous, and suddenly I throw open a door and there are all these naked fucking girls, maybe two dozen of them. I'm in the girls' shower room or something. I look at them and they're all gleeful and giggling and touching each other, and their tits are jiggling

up and down and their bushes are waving and, oh, God, I can hardly stand it. I'm only just fourteen, and then I sense there's something wrong. These girls had the bodies of eighteen-year-old women but they had the minds of three-year-olds. I was just blown over."

Maxwell stood watching for more than a minute. Then he noticed he was getting wet. He ran through the shower room, and through the lockers beyond, and he kept going, and then somehow he opened another wrong door, and there before him, strapped to beds, were humans whose heads looked like horses' heads. But they were real people, retarded and deformed. Their legs looked like his legs and their torsos looked like his torso, and their arms were his arms, but their heads were the heads of horses, long and fleshy, all mouth and exaggerated eyes, covered with coarse hair, the tongues as thick as cardboard.

Maxwell panicked and ran and when he finally rejoined his father, he couldn't stop crying.

Everybody's quiet. The clapboard cabin with all the flickering candles no longer looks like a cathedral. It looks like a mortuary.



Maxwell offers a money-back guarantee. If you don't like the dope, return it and he'll refund your money. Not many growers anywhere in the world offer a money-back guarantee, and wherever Maxwell does business he is treated with respect.

"I don't think too many people have seen sights like those," says Maxwell.

Kathie's looking at the floor. She's a little scared. Max has overdone it. We've gone from candles to death, from sweet, flickering light to too much intensity. Humans with the heads of horses. Maxwell started out covering up everyone's paranoia and he ended up feeding it.

It's almost time to leave.

Max and Billie continue to weigh out the bud into quarter-pound bags and wrap the bags in Seal-a-Meal. Max uses an expensive scale because he is religious about getting the weight right. Some of the pot is still wet, not completely cured. Maxwell adds an extra quarter-ounce or so to these bags since they may dry out and shrink a bit during shipping. Maxwell offers a money-back guarantee. If you don't like the dope, return it and he'll refund your money. Not many growers anywhere in the world offer a money-back guarantee, and wherever Maxwell does business he is treated with respect. Only once did someone break trust. Maxwell was accused of packing 13-ounce pounds. Maxwell whipped out the refund on the spot. Next year this customer wanted to do business again. "You had your chance, fucker, and you blew it," Maxwell told him. But this stuff is being sent to a Preferred Customer in New York City. A Preferred Customer is one who pays in advance. There are about as many Preferred Customers in the marijuana trade as there are money-back guarantees. This shipment is being sold for \$700 a quarter-pound. The first big lot of the season. The partners need the money.

Maxwell sells quarter-pounds for

\$450 to \$700 depending on the variables. The variables are: How much do you want? When do you want it? How much are you willing to pay? Transportation costs must also be figured in. Driving the pickup from San Francisco to Denver, say, extracts a certain value-added tax: two days of paranoia. These 20 pounds are going east with Emory Air Freight. You've seen the ads on television. The harried junior exec must get the contracts to the big boss overnight. Not everything sent by air courier belongs to IBM and Exxon.

Maxwell tapes the packages with a specially lined tape and crisscrosses the brown paper in a subtle pattern. If someone opens the shipment, takes out a few pounds and tries to repackage it, Maxwell has a chance at tracing down the source of the rip-off.

The pot is put into the coolers which carried the Heineken. Nobody's talking much. Everybody is both tense and giddy at the same time. A lot of watering, and fertilizing, and sexing, a lot of hours scanning the sky for spotter planes went into this first shipment. It is not at all a given that these 20 pounds will make it to New York. First they must ride down the road to town, which means nobody who could create a problem can know that Maxwell is transporting tonight. Nobody must pay a midnight visit to Max in his San Francisco motel room, either, where he will sleep with the coolers beside the bed. Nobody must tamper with the stuff en route. (While Maxwell does not particularly trust Emory Air Freight, he trusts the Post Office and United Parcel even less.) The Preferred Customer must retain his reputation for the honest count, and, lastly, nobody must stick a gun in

the customer's face and take off the shipment at the New York end, although that is not the worst calamity in the long chain of risks. If the Preferred Customer gets ripped off, well, that's his problem, or so it will be argued.

The greatest concern centers around poachers. Last week three men hit the parcel closest to 101, many miles east. The grower was watching TV with his youngest child held in his arms. A small, dark man rang the bell. The grower's wife answered the door. The man stepped inside and explained that he was lost. When he saw that the grower had a baby in his arms, he put a German Walther PPK, a very expensive automatic pistol, indeed, to the woman's head and told them both not to move. The man's two partners then ransacked the greenhouse and cut the crown tops off the plants. The man spoke with a Middle Eastern accent, which is not, to say the least, typical of people hereabouts. Some speculated the raiders were Israeli Mafia.

Maxwell thinks the poachers were Iranians and says the grower was very lucky because, "SAVAK lived to torture people and now they're all over here."

But the shipment could also be taken off by the county sheriff. In terms of interdicting marijuana, California sheriffs are highly sophisticated. Maxwell does not want to run into someone like Bill Stewart, for instance. Bill Stewart may be the most hated narcotics agent in America, not so much because he is famous, although he is not unknown, but because he excites, well, a certain intensity of feeling among the 30,000 dope farmers of Northern California.

For years Stewart was the deputy sheriff in charge of narcotics enforcement in Mendocino County. Stewart's raiders lead the state in cultivation busts and pounds seized.

Bill Stewart once almost busted Maxwell. Maxwell was helping to guard a friend's crop up in Mendocino when the grower's girlfriend ran into the big green surplus tent they were using to dry the plants and shouted, "Oh, Lord, it's the fucking feds!" The woman's eyes were sympaku. You could see white all around her pupils. And she yelled "fucking feds" in such a goofy, stereotyped, right out of Elliott Ness, late-night-TV sort of way that Maxwell had started to laugh before he and everybody else had jammed out of the tent.

Maxwell kept running for hours, too, even though he knew the terrain. Bill Stewart had sent runners, particularly

/ continued on page 75

The Death of the Father

After the funeral everything was up for sale.

My mother had died a year earlier. A week after my father's death I stood in his house alone. It was in Arcadia, and the nearest I had come to the house in some time was passing by on the freeway on my way to Santa Anita.

I was unknown to the neighbors. The funeral was over, and I walked to the sink, poured a glass of water, drank it, then went outside. Not knowing what else to do, I picked up the hose, turned on the water and began watering the shrubbery. Curtains drew back as I stood on the front lawn. Then they began coming out of their houses. A

woman walked over from across the street.

"Are you Henry?" she asked me.

I told her that I was Henry.

"We knew your father for years."

Then her husband walked over.

"We knew your mother, too," he said.

I bent over and shut off the hose. "Won't you

come in?" I asked. They introduced themselves as Tom and Nellie Miller and we went into the house.

"You look just like your father."

"Yes, so they tell me."

We sat and looked at each other.

"Oh," said the woman, "he had so many pictures. He must have liked pictures."

"Yes, he did, didn't he?"

"I just love that painting of the windmill in the sunset."

"You can have it."

"Oh, can I?"

The doorbell rang. It was the Gibsons. The Gibsons told me that they also had been neighbors of my father's for years.

"You look just like your father,"

said Mrs. Gibson.

"Henry has given us the painting of the windmill."

"That's nice. I love that painting of the blue horse."

"You can have it, Mrs. Gibson."

"Oh, you don't mean it?"

"Yes, it's all right."

The doorbell rang again and another couple came in. I left the door ajar. Soon a single man stuck his head inside. "I'm Doug Hudson. My wife's at the hairdresser's."

"Come in, Mr. Hudson."

Others arrived, mostly in pairs. They began to circulate through the house.

"Are you going to sell the place?"

"I think I will."

"It's a lovely neighborhood."

"I can see that."

"Oh, I just love this frame but I don't like the picture."

"Take the frame."

"But what should I do with the picture?"

"Throw it in the trash." I looked around. "If anybody sees a picture they like, please take it."

They did. Soon the walls were bare.

"Do you need these chairs?"

"No, not really."

Passersby were coming in from the street, and not even bothering to introduce themselves.

"How about the sofa?" someone asked in a very loud voice. "Do you want it?"

"I don't want the sofa," I said.

They took the sofa, then the breakfast-nook table and chairs.

"You have a toaster here somewhere, don't you, Henry?"

They took the toaster.

"You don't need these dishes, do you?"

"No."

"And the silverware?"

"No."

"How about the coffeepot and the blender?"

"Take them."

One of the ladies opened a cupboard on the back porch. "What about all these preserved fruits? You'll never be able to eat all these."

"All right, everybody, take some. But try to divide them equally."

"Oh, I want the strawberries!"

"Oh, I want the figs!"

"Oh, I want the marmalade!"

People kept leaving and returning, bringing new people with them.

"Hey, here's a fifth of whiskey in the cupboard! Do you drink, Henry?"

"Leave the whiskey."

The house was getting crowded. The toilet flushed. Somebody knocked a glass from the sink and broke it.

"You better save this vacuum cleaner, Henry. You can use it for your apartment."

"All right, I'll keep it."

"He had some garden tools in the garage. How about the garden tools?"

"No, I better keep those."

"I'll give you fifteen dollars for the garden tools."

"Okay."

He gave me the \$15 and I gave him the key to the garage. Soon you could hear him rolling the lawn mower across the street to his place.

"You shouldn't have given him all that equipment for fifteen dollars, Henry. It was worth much more than that."

I didn't answer.

"How about the car? It's four years old."

"I think I'll keep the car."

"I'll give you fifty dollars for it."

"I think I'll keep the car."

Somebody rolled up the rug in the front room. After that people began to lose interest. Soon there

BUKOWSKI

NOTES OF A DIRTY OLD MAN

Illustration by Stephen Kroninger



were only three or four left, then they were all gone. They left me the garden hose, the bed, the refrigerator and stove, and a roll of toilet paper.

I walked outside and locked the

garage door. Two small boys came by on roller skates. They stopped as I was locking the garage doors.

"See that man?"

"Yes."

"His father died."

They skated on. I picked up the hose, turned the faucet on and began to water the roses. □

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Wrong in the Past



Fiction by Lynne Tillman
Illustrations by
Melora Walters

It was Ramadan, the holiest time for Moslems. I'd just arrived in Istanbul, and went straight to the Pudding Shop, which was on a diagonal from the Blue Mosque. One of the Turks who frequented the place, Cengiz, was a poet and chicken farmer who had been in jail for poems that were considered dangerous to the state. He helped me find a room.

Roger and Tony, inexperienced English smugglers, lived next door to my lodging. Tony was part Portuguese, part English, and given to hysteria. Roger was from the north of England, very calm, very quiet. He often seemed barely alive. He tempered Tony's Latin blood with his own, which was more like tea.

The Turks were fasting, I was eating more and more, and so were Roger and Tony. They had a chunk of Afghani, which made me wild with hunger, compelling me to go out in the middle of the night for something to eat. Usually it was Roger, Tony and I, the only Westerners, and a few dissident Turks in a late-night *lokanta* (restaurant). One of the Turks was eating chicken and waving it in the air, making a point or two to an imaginary companion, laughing, pieces of the bird flying around the restaurant. We'd all start laughing, and Tony would get nervous that they'd know we were stoned and then we'd leave.

Since Tony and Roger were intent on being dealers, no matter their abilities, we sat in their small unheated hotel room, discussing what to do and how to do it. They wanted to go south to find a contact. We passed hour after hour timelessly together. It was finally late and quiet. Several cars rode down our street. Their headlights lit up our windows. "Get down," Tony said. "Get down. Police." "Tony," Roger said without energy, "we're two flights up." "Get down," he repeated. We all got down and lay there for a bit, while nothing happened and continued not to happen. I told them they could go south without me. I said I'd catch up with them there.



Cengiz invited some Pudding Shop habitués to his apartment which wasn't far from his chicken farm. He lived in the old city. He served us chicken, his chicken, about which he spoke with a reverence reserved only for women, hashish and the Bosphorus, the river that divides the East from the West. He had large farmer hands and a solid body and he spoke in a whisper, especially late at night. He told stories as he smoked, inventing English as he went along, and squinted his eyes as if the sun were bothering him. He was always in love and always with the wrong women, married women. "Cops and robbers," I said to him, laughing. He blew out the smoke slowly and said it was so. He insisted upon showing us the way to our hotels, saying he knew Istanbul better. On the street a gang of men, old and young, jumped on him, hitting him. "Run," Cengiz yelled, "run." We ran, feeling wrong. When he appeared again at the Pudding Shop, he didn't mention it, and neither did I.



Time was passing and Istanbul began to seem like the center of the universe, a long line of people going in either direction. East to West and back again. An Englishman called Billy, in import-export as he put it, took me to a *lokanta* outside the Blue Mosque district. We were the only Westerners, and until the gypsies came in I was the only woman. They seemed to be family, mother, daughter and son or husband. The daughter danced for money, a fragile beauty with eyes that were dark and wet like the November weather.

She asked me to dance with her. I'd danced before in nightclubs here where if some man liked the way you danced he spit on money and pressed it on your forehead. Dancing with her was like being in a harem for a minute. Then she disappeared with her family.

I sat down with Billy. A Turk threw his keys to me. Billy said, "I think we should go." But before we did, two other men approached our table and said, "Don't bother with these men. They are bad people. Please let us show you the hospitality of our country. I have a restaurant. May I invite you there?" I was charmed and looked at Billy who nodded assent. As we rose to go with them, Billy whispered, "When I say run, run," and we got into the car. One of the men was the chauffeur, the other, the boss and restaurant owner. The boss's mistress was waiting for us in the otherwise empty restaurant. She was a girl of 13 or 14 who, after being introduced to me, grabbed my bag and emptied it, looking for makeup. She used whatever she found and painted her face in front of us as we all drank Turkish coffee. We weren't there long when the boss said, "Now we will take you to your hotel. Which is it?" We told him that we were staying in different hotels.

We got into the car, leaving the young mistress, all made-up, in the *lokanta*. Billy and I sat in the back, the chauffeur and boss in front. The boss kept asking about our hotel, and we kept repeating that we lived in different hotels. The drive got longer and longer. We were taking a circuitous route, suddenly riding along Cengiz's beloved Bosphorus. Billy held my hand. The car stopped on the

deserted highway and the boss jumped out and opened the door next to Billy. Billy got out and the boss tried to shut the door. Billy protested and kept the door open, while I edged out through the opening. I stood behind Billy who turned and said, "Now. Run." I started to run, and looked back, afraid to look, but having to know, like Lot's wife. The boss had pulled out a knife. I stopped. "Run," Billy yelled again. I ran and he started running, too. The two men gave chase for a hundred yards or so, then quit. We kept running and Billy shouted, "I knew they wanted you or me." The sight of two Westerners running along the highway excited the passengers in a *dolmus* (group taxi), and they stopped for us. We said, "Bad men, bad men." They all nodded, as if they agreed with us, and took us back to Istanbul. Billy left the following day to do his business in the East.

The next few days I kept quiet. I'd been told to run more often in Istanbul than anywhere else I'd ever been. The Pudding Shop was steamy and warm when I ventured there again after my self-enforced absence. Cengiz and I drank endless cups of Turkish tea, very sweet, served in small glasses shaped like Lillian Russell. He told me that all the Turks I'd been meeting were bad and that most Turks were bad. He said the ones who hung out in the Blue Mosque district might be hash smokers or they might be criminals. He dragged on a cigarette and drank his tea. "When Turks smoke," he said, "they either go mad or become beautiful."

At least Cengiz was beautiful. We went to the Bosphorus on a clear blue day in December. He said, "I think you should marry me and stay in Istanbul. This life isn't good for you." It was cold, and as we spoke our words formed clouds. "No," I said, "I don't think I can." But as I said it I imagined living forever in Istanbul, married to Cengiz, a poet/chicken farmer, drinking tea, eating chicken and seeing every Italian western that was ever made. The ones that don't go to the West, like *His Name Was Johnny*, sequel to *John Il Bastardo*. *His Name Was Johnny*—shot entirely in slow motion, and all of it a flashback, as Johnny lies dying, its dreaminess analagous to life in Istanbul. Time passed weirdly.

The Dervishes were in the south and I wanted to leave Istanbul. For a week, I told Cengiz. I got into a van with five Germans, one of whom I had known in New York. Freddi ran a boutique in Düsseldorf; it was his van, and he was the group leader. The first city we stopped in was having a carnival. We'd been sleeping in the van for a couple of days, and pissing by the side of the road, but when we got out of the van, we were mobbed by young Turks who imagined we were the Rolling Stones. Ceremonially we were driven around town in a horse-drawn carriage, ending up at the belly-dancers' tent. Given free entrance we were escorted to the first rows. One of the belly dancers was large and sloppy, her blouse falling off her shoulders as she threw her head back, her rolls of flesh moving up and down in time with the insinuating music. If I stay with Cengiz, I thought, I'll end up like that.

The carriage driver guided us to a hotel that he indicated with his broad smile was all right. Tony and Roger walked out as we drifted in. "This is a dream," I said to them. Roger nodded, Tony smiled nervously, and they both turned around and followed us to our rooms.

There was a knock on the door. A waiter stood outside holding a tray of tea we hadn't ordered. We thanked him and took it. Several minutes later another knock. The same waiter. This time he said, "Hashish." Roger and Tony showed

him in. The waiter came in and offered us his Turkish, and Freddi brought out his Afghani. As the waiter smoked, his eyes got darker and wetter. He closed them and began to murmur. "Hashish, hashish, hashish, hashish." He whispered the word as if it were the name of God. He sat very still on his wooden chair and left a happy man.

We went further south, the countryside getting wilder. Freddi insisted we were in real danger, and we agreed to cook our hash into a candy. We had made camp in a forest, and over a small fire Freddi melted the hash into a mixture of sugar and water. It crystallized into flat rock candy. When Freddi sucked on the candy, he looked like Marlene Dietrich.

With another of the Germans, I took a walk along the highway, leaving the others around the meager campfire. We walked and walked, seeing no one, hearing only the wind as it blew rough and hard against the trees and rocks. As if it were a mirage, we happened upon a café, a kind of shack. We knew we must be near a town. Within minutes a policeman got out of his car and demanded our passports, which we'd left in the forest. We were unable to explain anything; we had no languages in common. He was about to take us with him when another Turk, a civilian, happened along the road and translated for us. He knew German. Miraculously we were set free. We walked back fast and within an hour Freddi had us all packed and we were on the road to Istanbul. We discovered it was Christmas Day when we turned on the radio.



he Pudding Shop was the same, even the new faces were the same. Cengiz greeted me and we traded stories. The Westerner Abraham, who lived in a van and was about 70, had deceived Cengiz yet again. "It's time for you to go back," he said. "Yesterday, two Westerners—an English man and an American girl—were taken in for questioning by the Turkish police. The man was wanted by Interpol. They'd come by car and the police had the license plate. The woman got scared. In the station. She pulled out a gun and killed four police. Four. Then they ran away to a *lokanta*, not far from the stationhouse or Pudding Shop. They found them, of course. They killed the man. Captured the woman." He showed me a newspaper headline with "American" in very large type. "They hate Americans now. Turks very angry. It's a bad time for you to be here." As if this were a movie, a cop car pulled up outside the Pudding Shop. A young woman was pushed out. Cameras and TV crews surrounded her and the detectives. Cengiz said, "Let me know where you are and I'll write you. I'll think of you when I drink tea or when I smoke by the Bosphorus." I left the same day.

Cengiz kept his word and wrote:

"Today was nice, I went to the chicken farm. It was the thing I must do. It took nearly two hours and then my day started. I went to the Flarya Shore where you don't know. Nobody was hanging around, just the sea-birds and the waves. Seaside was covered with very nice sands. Sitting on the sands, rolled a cigarette there. I smoked by the sea. It was great, my dear, even though the weather was a little windy. I don't know how long I stayed there. To think about my past pleased me. I couldn't find anything wrong in my past life... Maybe there was something wrong, but I couldn't remember..." □

The Northern Californian Grower

Cultivating under the eyes of the Sinsemilla Strike Force takes a special kind of know-how.

Interview by Joe Delicado

Tom Lincoln, as he calls himself, likes to talk about marijuana. A former New Yorker, he's lived in California since 1972 and has been growing pot since 1977. He's never been arrested or ripped off, though he's come close.

The interview took place in August in Tom's farmhouse, after he'd given me a tour of his garden. He had 19 plants, 17 of them indica, from seeds of Nepalese, Burmese and Vietnamese origin. The plants were well-concealed but were in direct sun. Tom explained that he'd flown over his garden in a plane the week before and that neither he nor the pilot had been able to spot a single plant.

Shelley, Tom's partner for the past seven years, was at work during the day, but returned in the evening. She had about an ounce of pot left from her '83 stash, and was anxious for the '84 crop to come in. "I can't conceive of not growing pot," Shelley said. "Even if I was wealthy and could afford to buy my own I'd want to have a few plants. In six months they go from tiny seedlings to potent giants. It's an awesome journey I wouldn't want to miss."

HIGH TIMES: *Is the 1984 California marijuana crop different than other years?*

TOM LINCOLN: There are more growers now than ever before, and the total crop will be significantly bigger than ever before. The quality is also very high; the years of experience are paying off.

The police are trying to eradicate marijuana cultivation in national forests, and big busts have taken place, but as usual only a very small percentage of the crop is confiscated.

We've already had the Democratic National Convention and the Olympics in California. Growers are picking up that spirit and energy.

HIGH TIMES: *I've always thought that marijuana growers were isolated, and had little contact with one another.*

LINCOLN: They are a solitary lot. During the growing season, they seem to develop roots. They get stuck in the ground. But there is contact with one another, and the longer I'm in the business the more growers I meet. After all you do learn by talking to other marijuana farmers, and sometimes it's necessary, even essential to share information about fertilizer, seeds, and to talk about the paranoia. I've always had partners, but I have friends who grow crops on their own and that's hard. It can be frightening, especially if you're in the mountains without telephone,



electricity, mail, without civilization. That's when the grower is tested. He's out there with the wilderness, with all his fears, and they often surface. Some growers can't take the strain of being alone. One friend of mine flipped out. Now he's living in L.A., working for the phone company. I'd say that if you want to stay in the business you need to have friends, family, a network.

HIGH TIMES: *You use the word "business" to describe pot farming.*

LINCOLN: I grow marijuana to make money. It's my job. I know there are romantic ideas about growing pot, but when you start to dig holes in the ground, lug tons of manure, and lay out miles of irrigation line in the hot sun, the romance quickly evaporates.

I know growers who have made \$100,000 in a season. That's good money. I've never made that much. In 1977 I only made a few thousand dollars because I knew very little about what I was doing, and also because I harvested early and the flowers weren't mature. Dave, a dealer friend, was arrested. The police made him an offer—talk about other dealers and growers, or go to jail. Dave didn't want to name names, but he asked me to talk to the narcotics agent who had arrested him. I was about ten years older than Dave. I looked respectable and I had some status in the community. So I showed up at the police department, asked to see the narc, and was taken to a small room without windows, and no name on the door. There was a desk and a chair, that's all. The narc was about thirty. He wore blue jeans and cowboy boots. He had a pierced ear and he wore a coke spoon on a silver chain around his neck. As you can imagine, I felt extremely uncomfortable. I had about thirty marijuana plants in the ground, and there I was trying to persuade the narc not to prosecute Dave.

HIGH TIMES: *Did the narc suspect you were a grower?*

LINCOLN: Undoubtedly. He wanted to freak me out. He said, "Look, I know you have habits. Well, so do I. I'm in the habit of making busts. I can't stop myself. I make a small bust and then I want a bigger bust, and one bigger after that." He opened the desk drawer and took out a stack of photos of himself in different disguises. He'd been a hippie, a biker, a cowboy. "I've been around," he said. "I know what's going on."

HIGH TIMES: *What did you do?*

LINCOLN: I pulled my plants. I didn't want to take a chance. I certainly

didn't trust the narc and I didn't trust Dave either. I knew that he had ripped off a grower and he was ripping off his customers too. A couple of years later Dave tried to extort money from me. He and several friends showed up at my place one afternoon, said they were "revolutionaries," and that I was a capitalist, and demanded that I turn over 25 percent of my crop. I told Dave to get out and I haven't seen him since.

HIGH TIMES: *Financially, what was your best year?*

LINCOLN: Well, 1978 was my worst year. My own garden was a total flop but I did make money as a middle man. I had told a few close friends that I was getting into the California pot scene, and one day I got a phone call from a friend in New York. He'd gotten me high for the first time in 1967 when he was at college. He said that he was sending a client of his to see me, though he didn't say who it was. The client, Jimmy, arrived a few days later, bringing regards and a gram of cocaine. I had also known Jimmy in New York. He was a dealer who'd been going to Colombia since the early seventies. I contacted all the growers and dealers I knew in bars, restaurants, parking lots, and houses, smoking marijuana everywhere. As it turned out, Jimmy knew very little about pot; he didn't know, for example, that there was *cannabis sativa* and *cannabis indica*, though he'd bought tons of pot.

After dozens of meetings and negotiating sessions, Jimmy ended up buying a small amount of pot in California. A Colombian steamer arrived in New York and he raced back East.

HIGH TIMES: *Sounds like you were disappointed.*

LINCOLN: I was, but I did get to meet lots of growers and there were some funny moments. I remember Jimmy said that he preferred California to Colombia because doing business in English was easier than doing it in Spanish.

I saw Jimmy again in the fall of 1979. I had just harvested my first good crop and had taken some of it to New York. Jimmy had just gotten back from Africa. He had the crazy idea of starting a multi-million dollar pot plantation in Nigeria, or the Congo, of sending California hippies there to grow it, then ship it across the Atlantic and smuggle it into the States, all under the cover of a tourist company.

HIGH TIMES: *How did Jimmy get his California pot to New York?*

LINCOLN: He shipped it in musical

instrument cases for an entire orchestra: tubas, saxophones, harps.

HIGH TIMES: *You mentioned 1979 as your first good year. Could you tell me more about it?*

LINCOLN: First of all, in the winter and spring of 1979 I had a small, ratty apartment in a Chicano neighborhood in the city. I was living with Shelley, and we were the only Anglos around. Shelley had a job and was also dealing coke. We had a steady stream of customers up the rickety stairs. After a while I thought that everyone knew what we were up to, including the landlord who stopped by one evening and said he'd found some coke in the laundry room and was it mine.

I was the stereotype of the junkie. I was doing a lot of drugs—not only coke and marijuana but also morphine and percodans, which Shelley's doctor had prescribed for her. We didn't have any money, and we weren't getting along. We had maps of South America on the wall and we'd daydream out loud about going down there.

One day Nick, an old friend, came to visit. He's a San Francisco dealer, has been for thirteen or fourteen years. Through his connections he'd acquired a small farm in Northern California, and he wanted to know if we'd go into partnership and grow pot. We weren't sure it would work out, but we figured it was worth a try, so we moved to the country. It was an area of old farms: grapes, apples, cattle, sheep, and marijuana growers too, as we discovered after a while.

That year we had Colombian seeds. We cleared a large area, as though we were growing a perfectly legal crop, and the plants got to be eighteen feet tall and very visible. I remember one hot afternoon in October, Shelley was sunbathing nude. A helicopter flew over and circled our land. At first Shelley covered herself with a towel, then she decided it was better if they saw her than if they saw the pot, so she took off the towel and gave them a good look.

HIGH TIMES: *Was there much police activity?*

LINCOLN: 1979 was the year the Sinsemilla Strike Force was started by Deukmejian, who was then the California Attorney General. Every day we'd read about pot busts, but we made it through okay. The biggest problems we had were among ourselves. Nick began acting like the boss.

During the harvest he insisted on weighing and bagging all the pot him-

self. He'd take it to the city, sell it, bring back the cash and a gram of cocaine. He'd put it all on the living room table, along with his .38, as though he were in a movie. Finally, I had to get out of there. I went to New York, thinking things would cool off, but when I got back Nick and I got into a fight. He pulled the .38 on me and said "Don't make me have to use it." Then he moved back to the city, and Shelley and I stayed in the mountains, but we almost split up too.

HIGH TIMES: *Sounds like you had more than your share of trouble.*

LINCOLN: I don't think I'm all that exceptional. I've talked to lots of other growers, and they've all been through severe crises. Look, grape and tomato farmers have troubles. When you add the illegal aspect, the fear of busts and rip-offs, you magnify the tensions. The strain can be enormous.

Shelley started to have an affair with another grower. I'd look at my plants and all I could see was her and him. I felt betrayed. Forget about loyalty. I was ready to do him in. And I wasn't alone in having those thoughts because that summer we saw a play in Berkeley about marijuana and sex and jealousy and betrayal. It was helpful to know that other growers were going through similar situations.

HIGH TIMES: *What about your 1980 crop?*

LINCOLN: It was tremendous. That was the first year we grew indica. The seeds were from Afghanistan, the plants were huge, the marijuana was potent. We cleared about \$35,000.

By 1980 I began to feel that I was part of a larger marijuana economy, a marijuana culture. I started to travel. I had money to buy clothes, a car, to eat in a restaurant.

In 1979 I had bought a pair of boots with a \$100 bill and the store cashier had been so suspicious she had asked to see my driver's license and then had written the number on the bill. Just a year later \$100 bills were common, even in the smallest backwater California towns. We started to see new trucks and new houses. It was the start of boom time. The real estate business was soaring. And the sons and daughters of the old timers were growing pot, not just the hippies and drop-outs of the '60s and '70s.

I felt much better about myself as a marijuana grower. You see, on one hand, I'd read in the paper and hear on TV and the radio that marijuana growers were losers, that they were

lazy, irresponsible, a menace to society and that they ought to be locked up. Maybe I'm more vulnerable to that barrage than others. It certainly didn't help my self-esteem.

On the other hand, I was making good money and that made me feel good. But it was more than the money. Doctors, lawyers, professors, journalists, even a couple of Hollywood producers and directors, bought and smoked my pot. They regarded me as a romantic figure, an outlaw farmer, free, living off the land. I don't think that I encouraged that view. Still, it was awfully nice to get that praise. A close friend said that growing pot was a perfect way for a sixties rebel like myself to survive in the 1980s. In the eyes of the law I was an outlaw, a criminal but I was also a businessman, an entrepreneur.

HIGH TIMES: *One might say that you've had the best of both worlds.*

LINCOLN: The best and the worst. But by the spring of 1980 I was definitely upbeat. I met Ted Erikson, the Mendocino County Agricultural Commissioner. He was a maverick. He had made the mistake, in the eyes of the officials, of including marijuana in his annual crop report. Of course, marijuana was number one as a cash crop, way ahead of apples and pears. He caught hell and was forced to resign. But he never apologized. He told me that during Prohibition his family had grown grapes and that they'd shipped the grapes by rail to Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver, with instructions on how *not* to make wine. It was a strictly legal way of telling people how to make wine. Erikson gave me a sense of the past. He told me that marijuana used to grow wild along the tracks of the Southern Pacific railroad and that the East Indians who repaired the rails would pick it and smoke it. And it was legal, too, until about 1920. Erikson also talked about the California grape crop. About 80 percent of it is harvested by illegal aliens. We've got marijuana, an illegal crop, harvested by legal citizens, and we've got grapes, a legal crop, harvested by illegals.

HIGH TIMES: *There's a lot that's covered up, isn't there?*

LINCOLN: All the time, and by everyone involved, though there's no organized conspiracy.

HIGH TIMES: *But every so often the underground economy, the marijuana sub-culture, does surface, doesn't it?*

LINCOLN: Sometimes in a very big way and very suddenly, too. Edgar,

a friend of mine, had been growing marijuana for about ten years. Marijuana was his religion. He worshipped it, and I often thought that he regarded himself as the new "Adam," the new man in the new garden. And of course, he had his fall, his expulsion from what had been paradise. He and his followers made money and built houses, their own school, and meeting hall. Then Edgar got into local politics, became friends with the sheriff, and continued to grow marijuana. Well, he was ripped off, and he organized an armed band to defend themselves. They captured the thieves, beat them, then surrendered them to a deputy sheriff who cooled everyone down and persuaded the thieves to forget about the whole episode. It seemed as if it would all blow over, but one of the thieves had an uncle who was a cop. They went to the sheriff, and soon Edgar's Eden was a war zone. Helicopters flew over and soldiers parachuted to the ground, confiscated the pot, and made arrests. Edgar resigned from public office and went to prison. I visited him on Sundays. While in prison he'd given testimony about the deputy sheriff. He lied and said the deputy had done nothing wrong and, because of Edgar's word, that deputy got to keep his job. Edgar's out of prison now, growing marijuana again and good friends with the deputy, too.

HIGH TIMES: *I imagine that a lot of people lead double lives.*

LINCOLN: Almost everyone I know who grows pot has a job in town, whether it's as a clerk in the organic grocery, or as a secretary in the D.A.'s office. I took a straight job in 1982 which I still have. In the mountains I'm in overalls, boots, and Harrison Ford-style hat. In town I wear a white shirt, tie, pleated trousers. I can act straighter than the straights when I have to. It can be fun performing like that, but it's also necessary protection.

HIGH TIMES: *I've often thought that it's a deep human need to have a secret existence, an arena that the government, Big Brother, doesn't know about.*

LINCOLN: Yes, and secret marijuana gardens do make that possible. You can escape. You can live a fantasy existence, but the fantasy is often invaded and in danger of being destroyed. And living two lives is hard. In 1982 I wanted to stop growing pot. I felt that the pressure was too great. I wanted to do my nine-to-five job, but I couldn't make enough money to survive that way. I chose to grow pot again, but I



felt as though I'd been forced to do it by powers beyond my control.

HIGH TIMES: *How did you get into that state of mind?*

LINCOLN: In the summer of 1981 Shelley and I were spotted by the sheriff's helicopter. It was the third year in a row that we were growing in the same place. One of our neighbors had been arrested twice, the second time with over 3,000 plants, and the other neighbor had been ripped off. Our plants were in the open, a bright fluorescent green. The helicopter circled the garden so low I could see the expression on the face of the pilot. The chopper flew off, and I grabbed my machete, raced into the garden and harvested a plant. The chopper came back, circled, and I crouched under a pine tree. It was cat and mouse like that all afternoon. Shelley and I had about fifteen pounds of top quality buds drying in the shed, and we packed up, and drove to Bolinas, about 80 miles away to stay with friends. It was bizarre because we were there to hide out and the Marin County Sheriff's Department was making busts all over town. But we kept a low profile, dried and manicured the crop, and took it over the Golden Gate Bridge.

HIGH TIMES: *Who did you sell to?*

LINCOLN: To my old friend Nick. By then he had terrific connections all over the country, and he did much better as a city dealer than he had done as a mountain grower. He blossomed in that urban setting.

HIGH TIMES: *What did you do after you sold your crop?*

LINCOLN: We became brokers. We'd buy crops from Mendocino, Lake, Humboldt, Santa Cruz, and sell them

to Nick, but still he wanted more. He was always hungry for pot. The demand far outweighed the supply. We made money, but I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to grow again. I was afraid of being poor again; that's the worst crime in America. I had gotten addicted to having money, and to living the life style.

HIGH TIMES: *But the 'copter pilot had seen you. Weren't you afraid of getting busted if you began growing again?*

LINCOLN: The helicopter pilot had seen me. Shelley and I moved. We made arrangements to grow pot on someone else's land, up in the mountains about four hours from San Francisco, a place without telephone, or electricity, no paved roads, no stores. But there were dozens of marijuana growers, and many of them had been at it since 1967, 1968. They were proud, didn't feel ashamed or guilty. They worked hard, not only growing pot, but building their own houses, clearing land, putting in orchards and vineyards, repairing trucks and cars, raising pigs and chickens. They were incredibly self-sufficient, used solar energy.

HIGH TIMES: *Sounds utopian.*

LINCOLN: It was for a while. Every spring they have a ritual. It's on the last day of April, and sometimes there's still snow on the ground. They make a big bonfire in a meadow and invite everyone. Growers from all over come with marijuana from the previous year and they throw it on the fire. I did it and it felt good. Matilda, the woman who makes it all happen, explained that it was a ritual meant to remind people not to become greedy. You have to give it up, let it go up in smoke, as an offering to the gods. It did give me

pause. That season in the mountains I developed what I'd call a zen attitude, an acceptance of myself, of pot, of the patterns of living and dying, planting and harvesting. I was close to the earth; I was part of it. It definitely helped to belong to a community with rituals and a sense of its own identity.

HIGH TIMES: *And you made good money too?*

LINCOLN: We took home about \$40,000. All summer I felt like a peasant, and by the fall I was gentry, a gentleman farmer. Shelley had been in overalls and boots for months, and now she started wearing perfume, make-up, silk and leather. We lived high in San Francisco for a week. After crawling around that mountain, almost always covered with dust, it felt terrific to bust loose. I've always wanted to be successful, and marijuana made that possible. Successful in the American way. At the same time I try to have spiritual values. Sometimes there are conflicts, but I try to balance, to have wholeness, harmony.

HIGH TIMES: *What did you do in 1983?*

LINCOLN: Shelley and I got our own place. We both had jobs in town, and we grew a small crop. I also worked part-time for a big marijuana grower. He's in his fifties. He was born in the Central Valley, was raised on a farm, and when he was seventeen he went to San Francisco. In the 1950s he was smoking marijuana with black men. He told me they called marijuana "gag." He's been a smuggler and a dealer for thirty years. Marijuana is his calling. I worked hard for him, in part to make money, and in part to learn from him, to listen to his stories, and preserve the history.

HIGH TIMES: *Do you read the marijuana history?*

LINCOLN: Yes. I've read *Home Ground*, *Budding Prospects*, and *The Last Scam*. But so far no one has sufficiently described the scene. Of course it's an ongoing story.

HIGH TIMES: *You've grown pot for seven years and so far you've gotten away with it. Can you go on getting away with it?*

LINCOLN: I don't think I'm getting away with anything. I'm a farmer. Every year I plant my crop. I grow flowers. They're beautiful, aromatic, and they can help people to feel creative and relaxed. For me there's nothing more peaceful or more satisfying than to stand in a marijuana garden at harvest. Once you've done it, you never forget. □

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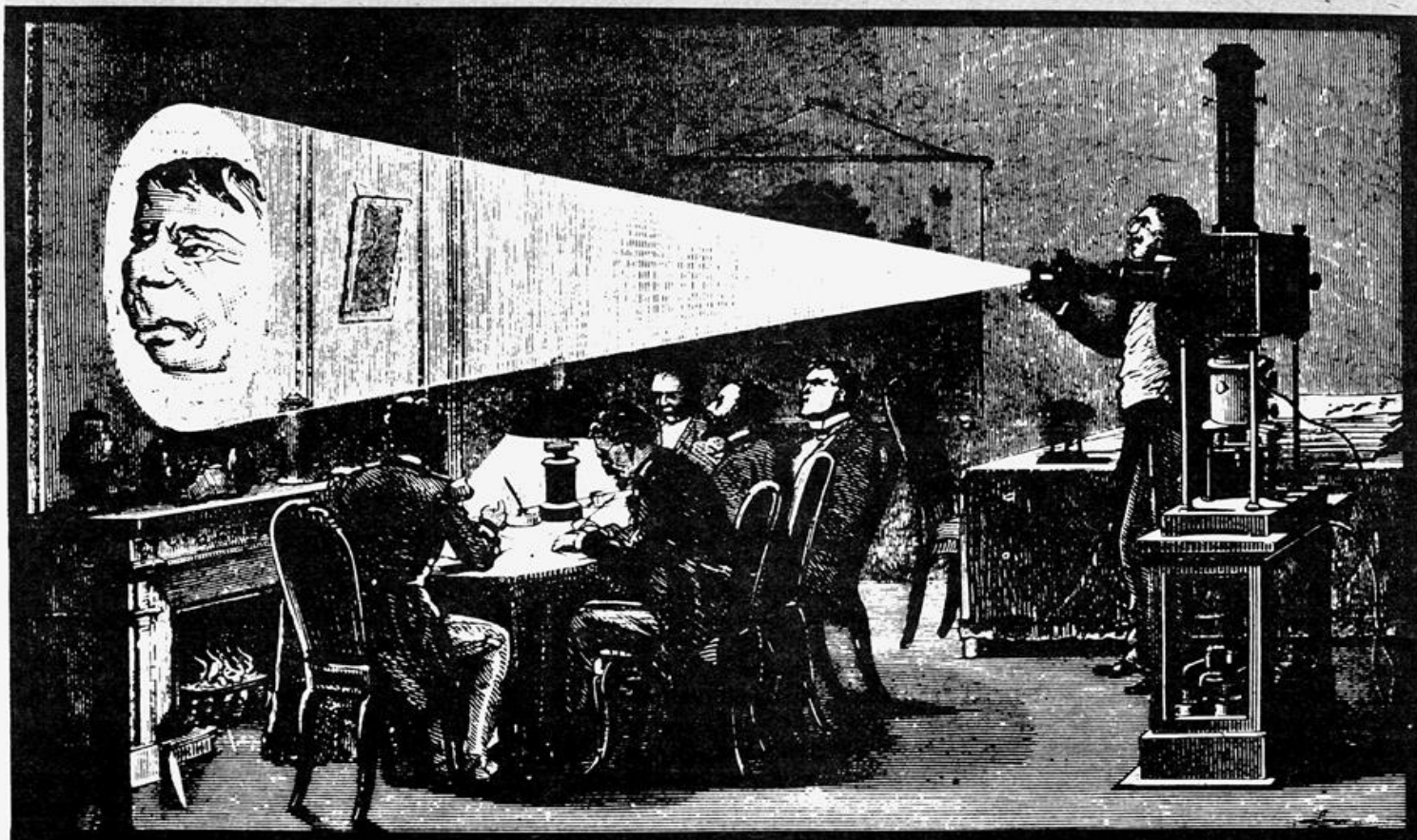
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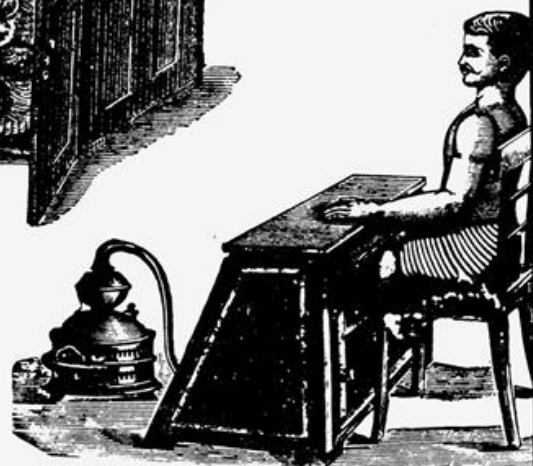
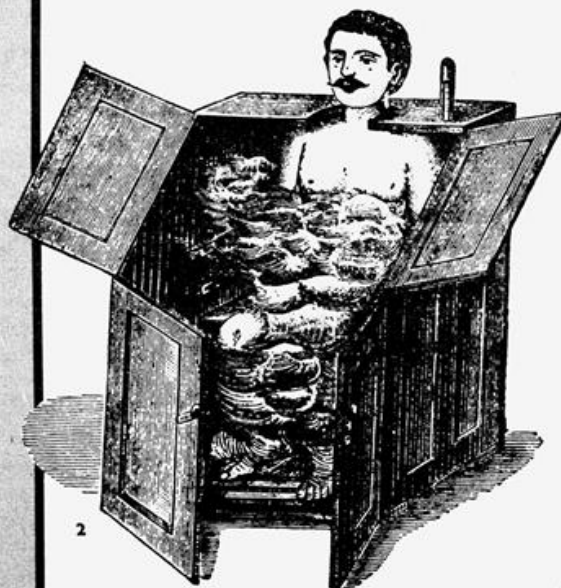
Sir Edward undergoing rapid briefing. State and Federal authorities cooperated to put at his fingertips all the data accumulated in years of combatting the spread of drug addiction.

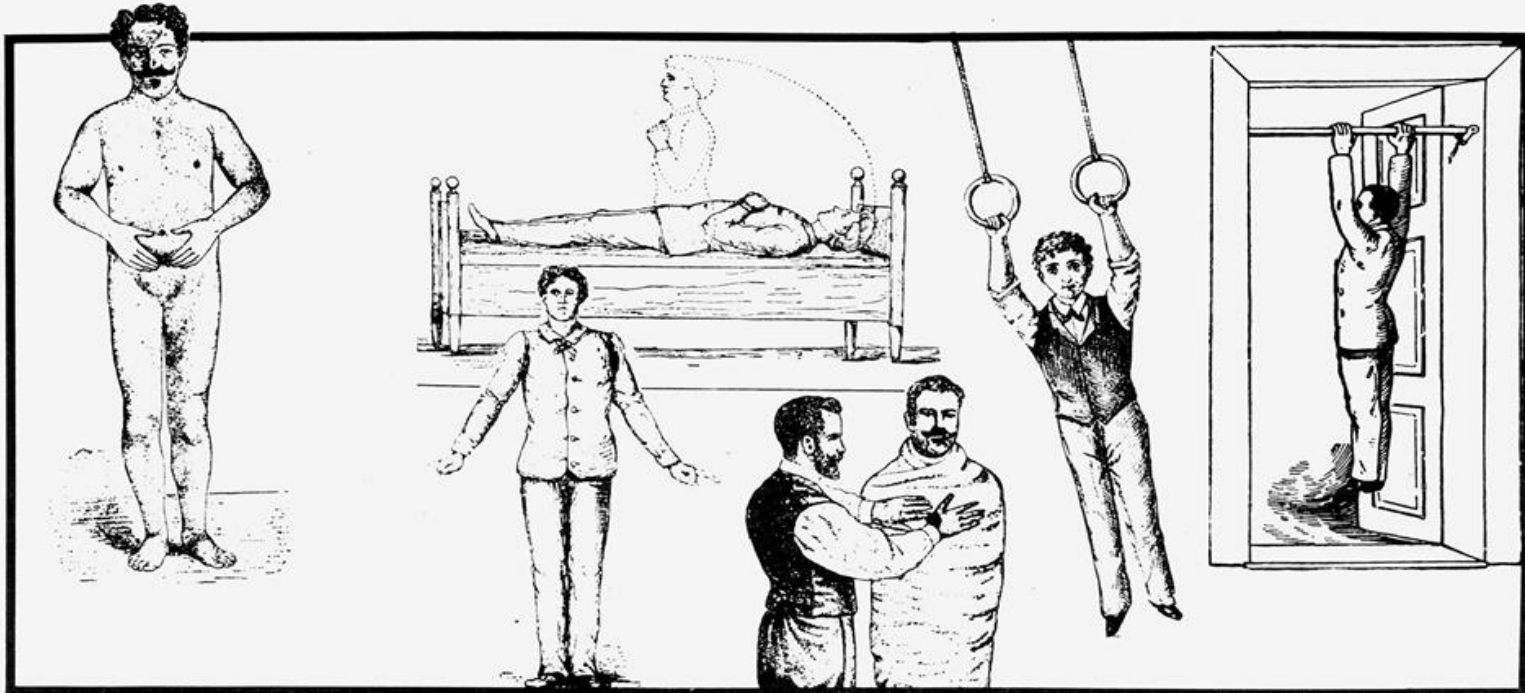
Some of the more striking exhibits shown are presented on the following pages and will convince the reader of both the thoroughness of the police, and the ingenuity and craft of certain of the more redoubtable criminals.



"Junkie" receiving daily dose. Stomach incisional system is in use only as a last resort when no more puncturable skin surface is available.

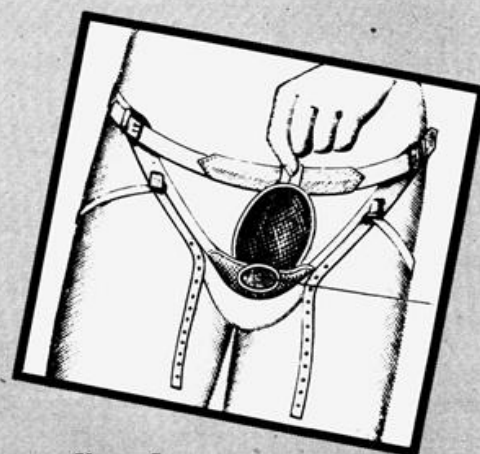
THE FLX. *Fig. 1: Californian two-hour pelvic region "fix." Fig. 2: "Opium Vapor Bath"; upright position for two-hour "fix." Fig. 3: "Quickie" vapor bath, upright position, for limbs only.*





Examples of "stoned" subjects.

"Stoned."



Two ingenious systems for smuggling dope.

Outlaws in Babylon

/ continued from page 59

fit cops in shorts and athletic shoes, to run them down. The chase went on for three hours, according to Maxwell. More than once he and the runners were so bushed they sat down and panted in each other's faces, less than 100 yards separating them. Maxwell finally shook the runners and doubled back to the scene of the bust. Stewart and his raiders were still there. Maxwell managed to slip a deer rifle out of the truck and sighted down the scope until he had the top of Bill Stewart's skull in the cross hairs.

"Could have wasted that sucker then and there," Maxwell recalls wistfully, "but I don't happen to think revenge is worth the price of incarceration."

(I will interview Bill Stewart and the first thing he will say to me is, "I have no liking for press people. Half the fucking reporters smoke dope.")

No, we don't want to run into Bill Stewart tonight, with 20 pounds of Maxwell's world-class dope packed into the coolers.

Ready to go. The coolers are packed. The wild, skunky odor is gone, which is the point of all the packing. Maxwell snaps the clasp but I notice just the slightest smile.

"You hear something, Billie?"

Billie's pouring himself a cup of rum. He stops. I freeze. Kathie moves to the window.

Far away, there is a buzz, a plane high in the sky.

"It's the... it's the... don't you hear the planes?"

"Oh, shit," says Billie. Now he knows Maxwell is joking. "Ain't been no planes in weeks. That one's commercial."

"God, I love those planes!" says Maxwell.

And now I can see what he's doing. Maxwell is changing the mood once again.

He tucks his arms behind his back and charges around the cabin, circling us, circling the cooler, making wild *whooshing!* sounds as if he were a five-year-old boy imitating a jet.

"Wish a plane *would* come down tonight," says Max. "Oh, fuck! Would I like to start this run out with a plane blasting down the canyon. Now that would be good luck."

The planes. F-15s or even "XPs" for "Experimental Prototype." They come screaming down the canyon like banshees on fire so low to the ground—100 feet, sometimes 50—that you can read

the faces of the pilots under their oxygen masks. The after-burners are enormous holes, 10 feet wide and 20 feet long, as big as the hideaway itself.

"Imagine the amount of air they suck in!" shouts Maxwell.

One morning a few minutes after dawn, Maxwell heard an XP at the entrance to their canyon, still 20 miles away, and he rushed outside stark naked from his sleeping bag and the jet came straight—*straight*—at him. These monster planes cause hysterical complaints from ranchers and retirees but Maxwell loves them. He's jumping up and down and screaming, cheering the pilot on. This is the way to greet the dawn! The pilot is clearing the madronas at a mere Mach 1, but the far side of the canyon looms up three seconds away and Maxwell just *knows* the pilot is going to wipe out the way pilots did week after week in Nam, so often that Max and selected buddies would stretch out on the bunkers near the air base, light up a number and watch the U.S. Air Force crash into Vietnamese mountains. But this pilot is better than those in Nam, and he crams that joystick into his crotch and the jet tips straight up like a cobra striking and the after-burners go off with rocket thrust and the machine climbs 10,000 feet in seconds and the valley reverberates—*shakes*—as if an earthquake has hit, and Maxwell looks down at himself and he sees that he has pissed his pants. Except that he is not wearing pants.

Unfortunately, the XPs are not out tonight. Too dark.

As we load the coolers and climb back into the cab, I happen to knock over my Heineken on the floor mat.

"Take a cup of water," commands Maxwell in a soft voice. "Wash out the smell good."

No joke. We're moving now. California's drunk-driving law is one of the toughest in the country. It's not worth a California cop's time to bust you for a joint, but he gets a gold star for a DUI (Driving Under the Influence). We cannot risk being searched. Maxwell says everything now in a strange, soft voice. Maxwell is zoned. This is serious. This is business.

"Head 'em up. Move 'em out." Billie waves from the trees.

The big pickup starts up the hill in four-wheel drive. Top of the long ridge. You can see Highway 101 from the crest where Maxwell first pulled out the Colt.

The line of headlights far below is like a line of phosphorescence along the night ocean's shore.

I don't think anything's going to stop us before we get to town.

Two more miles and a kid appears in the headlights.

Maxwell stops and rolls down the window.

"What's the matter?"

The kid is about 13, army jacket, short blond hair. He's got a big green duffel bag beside him. Kid's hysterical.

"You've got to help me," he almost cries. "A man just threatened to kill me."

Maxwell swivels his head and looks first off the shoulder of the road to the right, then to the left, then he searches in back of the truck. The Colt is on the seat, hammer back, safety on.

"Who threatened to kill you?"

"Right here," says the kid. "I'm trying to poach his crop. He says I'm trying to poach his crop! He says he's going back to get his gun and then he's going to kill me!"

The kid is serious.

Maxwell looks at him.

"You're 'X's' kid, aren't you?"

"Yeah, man, you've given me rides."

"What do you have in the bag?" I ask in a very neutral tone.

"Nothing, man, nothing. My clothes from the laundry."

He looks over his shoulder because time is wasting and then he opens the top of the bag and starts pulling out skivvies, T-shirts, dropping them in the road.

Maxwell looks at the kid again.

"Well, hey, what I think you ought to do, kid, is keep off the road here. Keep to the hill. You only live a mile farther in. If he comes back he'll follow the road and you'll be able to see his flashlight and crouch down."

No way Maxwell is going to get mixed up in this mess with the first 20 pounds of the harvest riding in the back of the truck.

The kid hustles off to the side of the road with his laundry bag.

"Ah, the bane of growing up in marijuana country." There's more sly cruelty than warmth in Maxwell's smile this time. "Hey, if the kid was so afraid, why didn't he jump in back of the truck and let us take him to town?" □

Excerpted from *Outlaws in Babylon: Shocking True Adventures on the Marijuana Frontier*, by Steve Chapple. © 1984 by Steve Chapple.

NEXT MONTH: Conclusion

A Monthly Report on Drugs and the Law

Written in consultation with Kevin Zeese, NORML Chief Counsel

The Sting Reconsidered

Lawmakers may have to strike it down for their own good. by Bob LaBrasca

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES have become addicted to the sting operation. And why not? It's a wondrous police technique, at least as far as the cops are concerned. Not only does it allow them to pick the criminals they want to bust, it lets them design the crimes they want them to commit.

I have no quarrel with that where corruption of public officials is concerned. Washington office holders are fond of solemnly telling us that those in positions of public trust must be measured by a "higher moral and ethical standard" than the rest of us. Very well then, let's have some legislation to that effect: affirming that it's okay to sting a senator or a congressman or the director of the Environmental Protection Agency or a judge or a policeman—but not the man in the street. Otherwise let's chuck the whole idea.

Oh, I know, that's a pipedream. Lawmakers don't make laws that diminish their own constitutional rights while leaving those of everyone else intact, but it is eminently sensible. I don't want the man I voted for stuffing Arab petrodollars into his congressional pockets, but I don't want undercover cops coming around with shady get-rich-quick schemes every time they hear I'm a little low on cash either. Don't they have better things to do?

I think a lot of people feel the same way. The most recent high-profile sting operations were the ones they ran against John DeLorean and the Chicago judges-on-the-take. The jury cut DeLorean loose, but I wouldn't bet on the chances of the Chicago judges. My guess is they'll catch sentences every bit as stiff as the ones handed to the Abscam defendants—all because people rightfully believe that someone paid to make decisions that affect the welfare of everyone else should be demonstrably immune to corruption.

Going after ordinary citizens that way, though, is not what you'd call effective law enforcement. It's not so much a matter of constitutionality as it is of prudent public policy. When the police set up a fencing operation for six months or a year and then bust all the burglars, who's to say how many of the burglaries got committed only because the word went out that there was a fence ready and willing to buy the loot? When the Drug Enforcement Administration baits one of its "reverse stings" (selling drugs in bulk, rather than buying them), who's to say how many people become drug dealers just because of the unanticipated opportunity?

Probably the most obnoxious example of this kind of nonsense, though, is DEA's Operation Optimal—much chronicled in these pages. Beginning in 1980, the federal drug agency set up a virtual franchise chain of phony chemical-supply companies; advertised them in magazines like *Rolling Stone*, *Popular Science*, *Easy Rider* and *HIGH TIMES*; and peddled drug precursors to everyone ignorant enough to believe the ads were legit. They roped in a whole battalion of nudnik amateur chemists that way, some of whom are still in federal jails.

Meanwhile DEA has a perfectly reasonable program for dealing with the problem of bathtub drugs: they maintain regional liaison with all chemical manufacturers and distributors and monitor sales of chemicals. Anyone who wishes to buy any of several chemicals crucial to the manufacture of street drugs must first fill out detailed forms which are then forwarded to the DEA. Agents can then pay unannounced visits to purchasers whose legitimacy is in question. This system could use some fine tuning, but on the whole it works pretty well.

The trouble is clever, nefarious peo-

ple with lots of money and connections keep making illegal drugs anyway. They smuggle chemicals into the country, or they bribe folks inside the big chemical companies to sell them chemicals out the side door, or they set up front companies supposedly involved in making legitimate products out of the same chemicals needed to make dope. These criminals know the system; they're not about to be sucked in by some lame magazine ad. Ferreting them out requires laborious investigation, and it can be a long time between busts.

In the meantime, the pencil pushers at Washington headquarters are clamoring for statistics they can put into the budget request before they send it up to the boys on the hill. How many arrests? How many clandestine labs closed down? The only thing that impresses those thick-headed legislators is a body count!

So what do the field agents give them? They give them Operation Optimal and nudnik amateur chemists. And only an exhaustive cost-benefit analysis could ever tell us how many millions of tax dollars are wasted so that drug agents can talk to legislators in a language they think will be understood.

In all honesty, I don't expect posturing politicians ever to sort out a problem like this. Any elected official who seriously begins to look into these dark corners is likely to be branded prodrug and suffer the electoral equivalent of lynching, come election day. My best, slim hope is that our chosen representatives are still interested enough in covering their own asses to want to prevent another Abscam. If that's true, then maybe, just maybe, the Justice Department will be convinced to toss out the stings—administratively, you know—in exchange for some future appropriation the Attorney General just can't live without.

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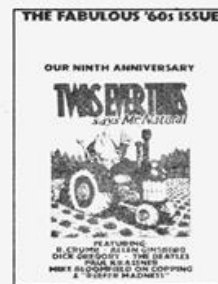
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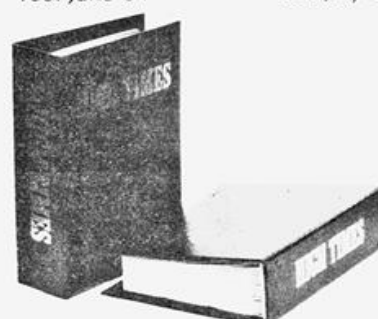
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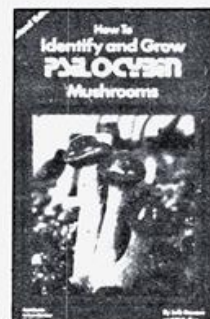
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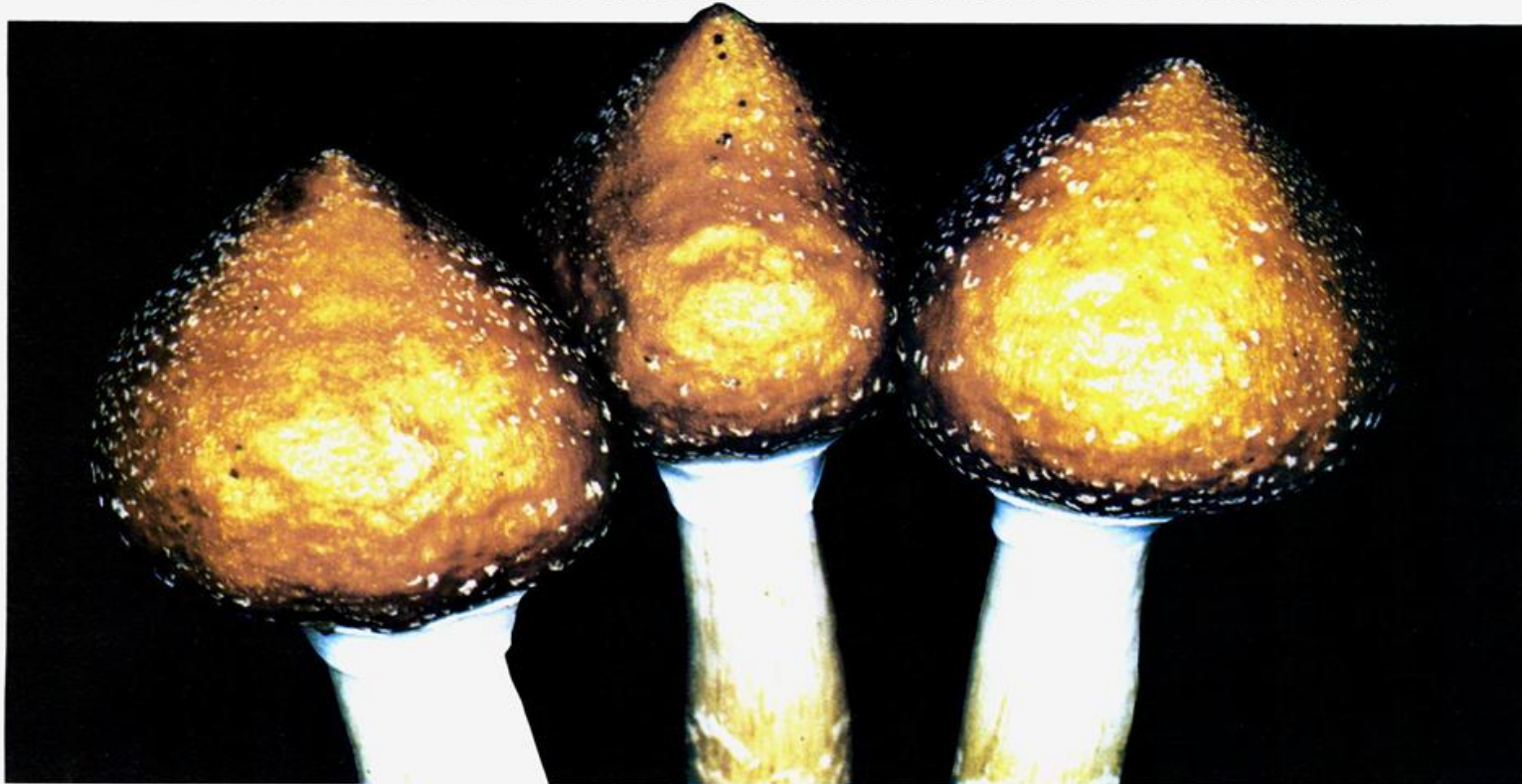
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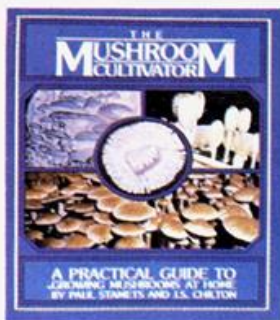
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THE UNSUNG HEROES OF ROCK 'N' ROLL

Screamin' Jay Hawkins by Nick Tosches

Screamin' Jay Hawkins stayed drunk through most of the psychedelic '60s. When I encountered him, in the early spring of 1973, he had put his Black & White scotch aside and was on the wagon. He drank coffee, a great deal of it, and orange juice. He smoked cigarettes, a great many of them. Sometimes he rolled his own Buglers, but on this day he smoked Lucky Strikes.

He was living at the Hotel Bryant, in a shabby room nine floors above Broadway in Times Square. With him were his wife, Jinny, and an obnoxious four-month-old Siamese cat named Cookie. A *Jet* calendar hung on one wall, variously weird hats from nails on another. The television was on, but without sound. Hawkins sat on the edge of the bed in a wool hat, Hawaiian-style sport-shirt, and horn-rimmed eyeglasses, taping a Frank Sinatra album from his stereo onto his reel-to-reel recorder. Beside him was a little ceramic foot-shaped ashtray in which he snuffed his Lucky Strikes.

At his feet was a mess of tapes—recordings he had made over the years for this company and that, but which, for this reason and that, had never been released. One tape bore a label with the words "Game of Love" on it. Thinking that it might be his version of the greaseball classic of that name which Wayne Fontana and His Mindbenders made in 1965, I asked Hawkins if he might let me hear it. He looked at me as if I had said something that I should not have said.

"Did you hear what song he wants to hear?" he said, turning to his wife. She gave him a dirty look. He uttered small sounds of resignation and affixed the tape. Soon his slurred voice came through the speakers, addressing some unseen audience: "We are gathered here tonight, ladies and gentlemen, laying down some fine sounds that you haven't heard and probably will never hear on the radio, simply because Decca is a stupid-ass record company and refuses to—"

Hawkins laughed. "I didn't mean for you to hear that." He manipulated the fast-forward mechanism

until he located "The Game of Love." It turned out not to be a version of the Wayne Fontana song, but a Screamin' Jay Hawkins original, a ballad about a man torn between his wife and another woman. As the song progressed, Jinny waxed ostensibly more piqued.

"All right, Jinny, you win," Hawkins spat as the song faded out.

"Did you listen closely to that song? Did you?" Jinny flared at him in her Filipino accent.

"Will you come on," Hawkins groaned. "The lyrics keep repeating over and over and over and over that the wife finally won. So what's the problem? What's the argument? The tune is dedicated to the wife, you understand?"

"Yeah," Jinny yelled, "but at the end it says, 'I'm gonna love you forever!' Now, *what* does that imply, huh?"

"Just what it says! 'I'm gonna love you forever!' I'm talkin' to the wife!"

"Don't give me that! What you're saying is that the wife won but at the same time you're gonna love this other woman forever."

"Oh, for God's sake, you misinterpret it!"

"No, no. Not me. Maybe *you* do!"

"Me! Come on, Jinny, who recorded the goddamn thing?"

"You! And the song says you're in love with this other—"

"Oh, come on, that's enough! I'm finished, I don't got no more to say."

"Well, then, you shouldn't have brought it up."

"Goddamn! Nick wanted to hear the tune! Blame Nick!"

"Well, you know, then, you, you don't have to—"

"Oh, man, come on. Let's not have an argument. It's only a goddamn song."

A strained stillness came, and Hawkins gazed vacantly into the little foot-shaped ashtray.

Jalacy J. Hawkins was born on July 18, 1929. He was placed in a Cleveland orphanage while in his infancy and adopted into a family of four children at the age of 18 months. He fought in the Cleveland Golden Gloves as a teenager. He quit high school in 1945 and went

to work as an entertainer in the Special Services Division of the U.S. Army–Air Force, performing at service clubs throughout America, Germany, Japan and Korea. In addition to singing and playing piano, he continued to pursue a career in boxing until 1949. In that year he defeated Billy McCann, the middleweight champion of Alaska, but the fight left Hawkins so badly beaten that he quit the business.

In 1952 he joined Tiny Grimes' band, both as a singer and as Grimes' chauffeur. Grimes had been one of Atlantic's first recording artists, signing with the label in 1947, little more than a month after its start. It was with Tiny Grimes and His Rockin' Highlanders, at Grimes' last Atlantic session, in January 1953, that Jay Hawkins made his first recording, "Screamin' Blues." It was deemed by Atlantic to be unsuitable for release.

Not long after that session Hawkins joined Johnny Sparrow and His Sparrows at the Powelton Café in Philadelphia. Early the next year he cut two singles, "Baptize Me in Wine" and "I Found My Way to Wine" (he had not yet graduated to Black & White), for the little Timely label. (Apollo bought out Timely in the summer of 1954 and eventually, in 1957, reissued these early Hawkins recordings.) In 1955 Hawkins recorded for Mercury and for its new subsidiary, Wing. The Mercury single, "(She Put the) Wamee (on Me)," presaged the outrageous and macabre vocal styling for which Hawkins would soon gain notoriety. At the end of the year, on a single for Grand called "I Is," he first used the nickname Screamin' Jay. It was also for Grand that Hawkins first recorded his song "I Put a Spell on You."

"I wrote the song," Hawkins told me, "because I was going out with some girl who decided that she was

/ continued on next page



gonna put me down. I decided that I didn't want her to put me down. So I wrote a song to her, and the song was 'I Put a Spell on You.' It was just a sweet ballad the way I cut it for Grand."

In January 1956 Stan Pat, who was Hawkins' manager of sorts, signed him to Wing. Recordings followed, but the deal proved to be otherwise barren, and in the summer of that year Hawkins signed with Okeh Records, Columbia's R&B subsidiary. His first Okeh session was held in New York on September 12. It was on that day that he created the monster that haunted him ever after.

"We were gonna cut a new version of 'I Put a Spell on You,'" Hawkins recalled. "Arnold Matson, who was the head of Columbia at the time, felt that we had to do something different in regards to the song. So he brought in a case of Italian Swiss Colony Muscatel, and we all got our heads bent—me, Panama Francis, Al Lukas, Leroy Kirkland, Big Al Sears, Sam Taylor, Mickey 'Guitar' Baker. We all got blind drunk.

"Ten days later the record came out. I listened to it and I heard all

those drunken screams and groans and yells. I thought, *Oh, my God.*"

The record became an underground sensation. Screamin' Jay Hawkins' vocal hallucinations were perceived as being invocatory of all manner of horrible things, from anal rape to cannibalism. Self-appointed guardians of morality made their displeasure known to the record company. The record was remastered so that its closing groan-coda was censored to a fast fade-out. This measure failed to appease, and the record was in the end banned by most radio stations. The pubescent sleaze-seekers of America, however, continued to buy the record in great numbers. It became a hit without a chart position.

"I didn't know what I had done," Hawkins said. "This record comes out and I've created a monster. Man, it was *weird*. I was forced to live the life of a monster. I'd go to do my act at Rockland Palace and there'd be all these goddamn mothers walking the street with picket signs: WE DON'T WANT OUR DAUGHTERS TO LOOK AT SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS! I mean, I'm some kinda bogeyman. I come outa

coffins. Skulls, snakes, crawlin' hands, fire and all that mess."

He had trouble with the caskets he used in his acts. For his first few shows, beginning with Alan Freed's 1956 New York Paramount show, he had rented coffins. This had cost him about fifty dollars a throw. Then the National Casket Association accused him of "making fun of the dead," and sent word to all funeral parlors not to rent any more coffins to one Mr. Jalacy Hawkins. He was thus forced to buy his own, which cost him \$850.

"Those were some trying years. God, the things I remember. There was this guy by the name of Bob Horn who did 'American Bandstand' from the Philadelphia Arena, which was at Forty-sixth and Market in West Philadelphia. He got busted for a certain reason which isn't necessary to discuss at the present time, and that's when Dick Clark took over 'American Bandstand.' And when he did, he started off at the Steel Pier in Atlantic City, New Jersey. He called me to open his first show for him. He was so pleased with the opening that he asked me to stay over and do the second day also. His parting words

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to me were, 'If I can ever do anything for you, don't hesitate to call me.' And then when I made 'Shattered' and a few other records for Decca, I sent word to Dick Clark, asking him if he would please play my records on his show. The reply which I got back was: 'Who's Screamin' Jay Hawkins?' Man, there's some assholes in this business, some real assholes. People forget. Quickly.

"In 1957 I was on a show with the Cadillacs, Billy Williams, Billy & Lillie Ford and Fats Domino. A young kid by the name of Paul Anka was on the show. He had just had a hit tune out called 'Diana.' I'm already tired, I just come off the road. Fats Domino was slated to close the show, but Fats canceled out for some reason which we don't have to go into here. My manager asked me to go on in Fats Domino's spot. So I insisted on the closing spot of the show, and I was politely told that Paul Anka was going to close the show. I said, 'To hell with Paul Anka.' So Paul Anka walks over to me and he says, 'I'll come to your funeral.' What a goddamn punk."

After a few years Hawkins got sick of things. He felt that there

was a vaguely organized conspiracy that kept his records from getting airplay after "I Put a Spell on You." His subsequent Okeh singles did not sell, nor did his remarkable 1958 Epic album, *At Home with Screamin' Jay Hawkins*. Records that he made for Decca, Chancellor, Enrica and Roulette went unnoticed. In the summer of 1965 Nina Simone had a modest R&B hit with her Philips recording of "I Put a Spell on You." But two albums that Hawkins himself made for Philips, *What That Is* (1969) and *Screamin' Jay Hawkins* (1970), did not fare so well.

"I guess I've rubbed a lot of people the wrong way. But when you work your heart out for somebody and they pay you half your money in cash and the other half by a check and that check bounces, or you spend your bread travelin' to a gig and work hard and then some cat stands there with five or six musclemen and tells you that he ain't gonna pay you because he didn't make his money, you get to the point where you start to question things..."

"I used to go with a girl in Phila-

delphia. Some disc jockey hit her. I punched his face. He never played any of my records again..."

"In those days, a nigger wasn't supposed to talk back, wasn't supposed to open his goddamn mouth, wasn't even supposed to say the word 'nigger.' Now things have changed because they found out that some niggers will kill ya. It's as simple as that. In those days, nobody fought back... I can't be concerned with other people, because I'm a nigger, and I speak from a nigger's viewpoint..."

"I got fed up. I went to Honolulu for ten years because I figured the world wasn't ready for me. In the meantime, all these people are recording my goddamn stuff. Nina Simone, Alan Price, the Animals, Creedence Clearwater Revival, the Who, Them, Manfred Mann, the Seekers, Arthur Brown. Melvin Van Peebles copied my whole act and put it on Broadway..."

"I mean, I've had some piss luck. All those people but me makin' money with my songs. I started Chuck Willis wearin' turbans. I started Little Richard wearin' capes. Look at Lord Sutch and Arthur Brown. Look at *Shaft*. Look at

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Screamin'

/ continued from previous page

Blacula. [Hawkins was offered the title role in that 1972 movie by Jack Hammer, but he turned it down.] At one time or another they've all taken a little something from me, and I get the impression that everybody's going places with what I was doing fifteen goddamn years ago. Everybody but me...

"Decca promised me the world if I'd only record for them. So what happened? Nothing. The record doesn't even get played once on the radio. Jesus, I recorded a country song for Philips ["Too Many Tears"]. I mean, that song was *something*. The steel-player was from the California Symphony Orchestra, and the rest of the band were jazz musicians. So what does the record company do? They only release it in *Hawaii*! Did you ever in your life hear of anything like that? I cut 'Itty Bitty Pretty One,' and what happens? A week later the Jackson 5 record it and have a hit with it, and meanwhile the company I cut it for [Hot Line] goes bankrupt and the record never gets distributed. It doesn't make sense to me."

It was fortunate for Hawkins that his music was at least more appreciated overseas than it was in his native land. He told me that his



bimonthly royalty statements brought respectable residuals from England, Germany, Japan, Australia, Spain, Turkey, Finland, Mexico and other countries. His Philips recording of "Constipation Blues" was actually a hit in Japan—and only Japan—in 1968. ("It was the first time I'd ever been constipated, so I decided to write a song about it. To this day I don't know what brought it on. I thought it was pretty unusual, you know? I was in the hospital at the time, and I said to myself, 'A subject like this must be put to music.' I guess the pains of not bein' able to get it out were understood by the Japanese.")

As weary and resentful of the Screamin' Jay Hawkins image as he had become, Hawkins didn't succeed in ridding himself of its curse in the years after our meeting on opposite sides of the little foot-shaped ashtray. What recognition and rewards he has since received have been granted more to the monster than to him. The Rolling Stones asked him to open their spectacular Madison Square Garden show of 1981, but only with the understanding that Hawkins did not perform without his coffin or his other garish gimmicks of old.

There was a plaintive sincerity in Hawkins' voice when he told me, "If it were up to me I wouldn't be Screamin' Jay Hawkins. My scream-in' was always just my way of being happy onstage. James Brown, he did an awful lot of screamin', but he didn't become Screamin' James Brown."

"I mean, I've got a voice. Why can't people just take me as a regular singer without makin' a bogeyman out of me? My musical background is people like Roy Milton, Wynonie Harris, Roy Brown, Cleanhead Vinson, Jay McShann, Louis Jordan, Varetta Dillard, Big Maybelle, Roy Hamilton, people like that. I come along and get a little weird, and all of a sudden I'm a monster or something. People won't listen to me as a singer. I'm some kind of monster. I don't wanna be a black Vincent Price. I'm sick of it, I hate it! I wanna do goddamn opera! I wanna sing! I wanna do *Figaro*! I wanna do 'Ave Maria'! 'The Lord's Prayer'! I wanna do real singing. I'm sick of being a monster." □

Excerpted from *Unsung Heroes of Rock 'n' Roll*, by Nick Tosches, Scribners, N.Y., Copyright © 1984.

Grow

/ continued from page 55

Afterwards, the new parasite flies out to repeat the process. *Encarsia formosa* need an average temperature (over a day-and-a-night period) of 70° or higher, otherwise the whiteflies will breed faster than they do. They like humidities of 50–70 percent, too. You can tell how *Encarsia formosa* is doing by the scales on the plants turning black—this means a parasite is or was inside. After a month, at least 20 percent of the scales would be black. If they aren't, you need to add more parasites. A package of 500 is enough for a light infestation in a small room or greenhouse.

Aphids—These pests come in many shapes and colors, but they always cluster together, shoulder to shoulder in colonies like little fat pigs. They are "farmed" by ants that eat the honeydew secreted by the insect. Any ant colonies should be eliminated before attempting biological controls, or the ants will attack the predators. The young aphids look like smaller versions of the parents. If you look close, they all have what resembles little dual exhaust pipes sticking out in the rear. Aphids like the tender shoots and leaves, and their attack often makes leaves curl and pucker. They're almost all females, and they're born pregnant, so you can imagine how fast they breed! They can start having young as soon as six days after hatching.

If you planned on pruning off any of the infested branches, this would be a good time. Hose the aphids off frequently, this washes off the honeydew, too. Biological controls include ladybug beetles and green lacewing larvae. Ladybugs work well in greenhouses that are screened in (they tend to fly off outside). They work best when there's a variety of flowering plants, with moist places to hide. Indoors under grow lights better results have been obtained with green lacewings. Special food is required for the adults, available from insectaries. You've probably seen adult lacewings at night in the summertime—they always seem attracted to lights, with fluttering, weak flights, and their large wings are a translucent green. Lacewing larvae eat just about everything; they don't stick

around well without lots of food, though, so you'll occasionally need to add more of them.

Thrips—These bugs are very small and slender, yellow to brown in color. Here again, a magnifier is the best way to see them. Their damage looks something like that of the spider mites, but the leaves look more scraped and rasped. That's the way thrips feed, and they leave tiny black specks all over the leaf, too. There isn't a good biological control for thrips, but I've included them because they sometimes show up. Tobacco-garlic sprays have been found to be very effective. Thrips don't seem to bother older plants so much, they attack the younger ones.

Mealybugs—These are large, white, cottony-looking insects. They tend to cluster together, especially at branch intersections. Here again, they produce honeydew, and along with it a sooty mold (which should be washed off). Young mealybugs look like their parents, but without so much "cotton" covering. Mealybugs only go through seven or eight generations a year, so they breed somewhat slower than some other pests, but they still can eventually build up to large numbers. The Australian ladybug *Cryptolaemus montrouzieri* devours mealybugs, and is a good control so long as temperatures stay above 70°. Use maybe five beetles per plant. If your temperature tends to be below 70°, you'll be better off using green lacewing larvae.

As you can see, using biological pest controls takes a little more care than just spraying some poison around, but I think you'll find them more effective and less time-consuming in the long run. After all, these are the pest controls mother nature's been using, and they've worked for a long, long time. They probably can work for you, too.


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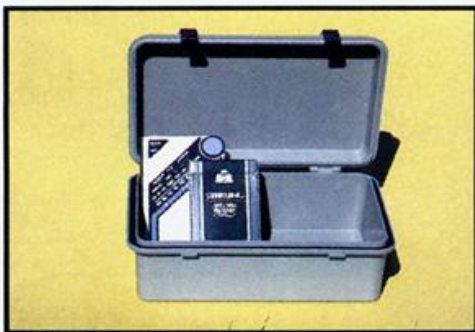


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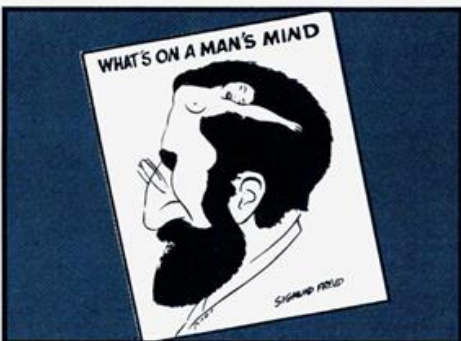
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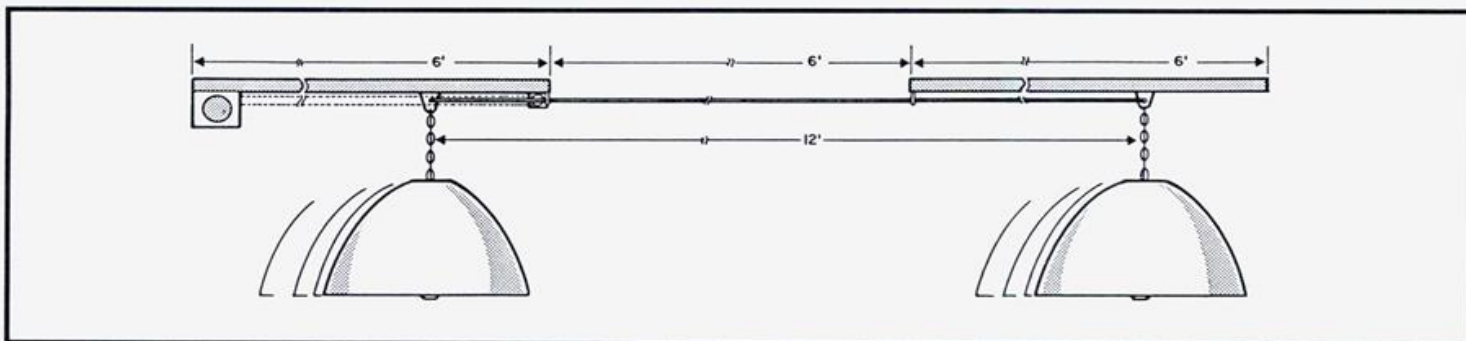
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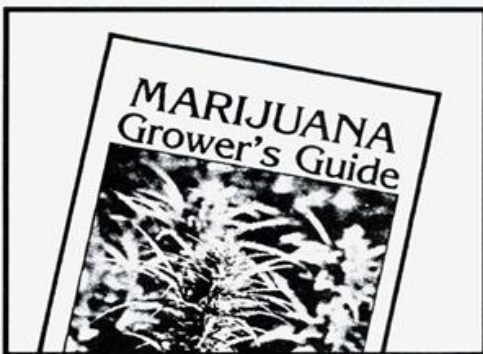
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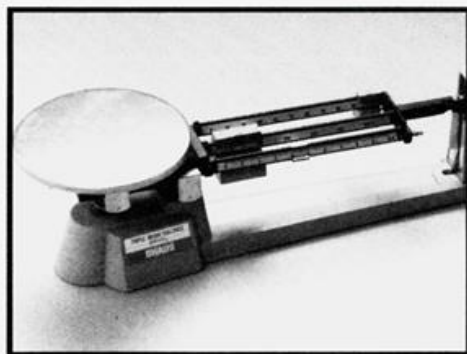
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SINGIN' IN THE PURPLE RAIN

Prince and the Apotheosis of Adolescent Angst

by Michael Wilmington

Purple Rain takes place in a glittery, glitzy city of night and sensation—where emotions are supercharged, colors are superheated and everything is soaked in a lurid, glistening light (midpoint between the halations from a cheap jukebox; floodlights sweeping a stage and neon drenching a mangy street). It is a city where that unholy American culture—Sex, Violence, Money and Fame—beat out their endless, dangerous, pounding tempo, a city where even a garbage-strewn alley can seem impossibly vast, spicy and hot with danger, glamorous beyond your wildest dreams.

Is this city really Minneapolis, Minnesota? Minneapolis of the Twin Cities, Lake Minnetonka and

that charismatic baseballer, Kent Hrbek? I don't know. I know a lot of people who've emigrated, and none of them speak of it in these grandiloquent terms. Minneapolis, crown gem of the Land of Sky Blue Waters, isn't described as the place where the night blazes, hearts flame, skies dance

and sex and rock 'n' roll spread a sheen over every street. What we see here looks instead like Hallucinogenia, USA: a principality of darkness and hormones, full of strutting dandies, rock wars and dudes on the make, with lakes of jism and a huge Fender bass as the town's central dynamo. It's a dream—a wet dream, but a very American one.

Here are the dream's contours... A Girl arrives in this City of Night: Apollonia, who wants to sing and dance. Up on the stage of the First Avenue Club is the seraphically magnetic Prince (here called "The Kid," though nearly all the other musicians, Apollonia included, use their real-life names). Like Lolita with Humbert, The Kid spreads a fire in her loins—although she is immediately and persistently pur-



● *Teenage sex fantasies and lots of dry ice make Purple Rain a winner.*

sued by another prince, a princeling of darkness named Morris Day, a lightly freckled snotty black kid, reeking with ghetto savoir-faire. Day wants Apollonia for his own—and Day is The Kid's opposite number, a phony where The Kid is a hero, a deadpan, pop-eyed, somber heavy-metal dandy. The Kid's band contains both sexes and is called the Revolution—but Day's group is an all-male, pimpy bunch who strut with him in unison and call themselves the Time (the Time that wears down Revolutions, and that, apparently, wounds all heels but Morris). Day wants The Kid out, and Apollonia in—onstage and in his bedroom, where, he assures her, "your lips would make a lollipop happy."

But a Clown cannot compete with a hero. And the only confections made happy by Apollonia, the only flowers that bloom in her mouth, belong to The Kid. Day, for all his flash and bravado, has the wrong tools for the battle. Instead, the hero has a deadlier enemy, a more implacable foe—himself. He is not, after all, a Prince, but only a Kid—

from a poor neighborhood and a mixed marriage, with a white mother and a tormented black father (a failed musician) who alternately beats her and proclaims, "I would die for you, if only you believed in me." Gradually, the pain of The Kid's private life begins to infiltrate the public. He loses Apollonia, loses his family, sees his band dissolve in squabbling, sees his world begin to shake and collapse, feels the rain begin to come down hard. The concert stumbles to its curtain—but there's still that one last set, three more killer numbers to turn everyone and everything around, the songs that will save his audience, save his world, save himself. A last question: will the Revolution beat Time?

Of course, this particular *Purple Rain* isn't really set in the Twin Cities—any more than it's really a biography of the rock star, Prince, who serves as its central, strangely gentle and androgynous image. It's an internalized movie; it seems to be taking place both on the world's biggest MTV receiver and inside somebody's head—The Kid's, Apollonia's, writer-

VISIONS

director Albert Magnoli's, maybe even Morris Day's. That's one of the odder twists—the notion you get that everything may be simultaneously happening to the hero and heroine; that perhaps, even, they're interchangeable, caught in a dream each of them is having about the other. The whole city becomes a dream walking, bounded by midnight and the dawn—and also, one of those quintessential movie fantasies where the hero (or heroine—or in *this* case, perhaps, the hero-heroine) strives, suffers, is redeemed and gains strength, fame and romance all at once.

If ever a recent movie musical had a sock climax, and if ever a rock band's closing set was made to bristle with every dramatic and emotional undertone that the melodies and cross-rhythms could stand, this is the one. *Purple Rain* is the first post-MTV musical that really works, and one of the kicks of the film is that, while it seems to be integrating something really new, mastering all those flash-and-glitz self-conscious video techniques that many disgruntled critics thought were ruining movies, it's actually somewhat old-fashioned, in many ways an old-style Hollywood musical. It may have been hyped-up and Freudianized and crammed with near-psychotic anguish, but though the sex is lascivious and unabashed, and though it's loaded with the kind of casually hip little sidelights on manners and morals and lingo that can make movies such delightful time capsules, there's nothing in this story that deviates far from what you'd expect in a "Golden Age" Hollywood musical. If you know *42nd Street*, *Footlight Parade*, *Singin' in the Rain* and the Astaire-Rogers musicals, you know pretty well what's going to happen to Prince and his ladylove (and his snarlingly lovable villain).

The movie doesn't really have much innovation in its plot line or narrative. Even its frankness about interracial marriages and the hints of bisexual chic in Prince's persona—that extravagant, almost foppish, shiny-curved, groin-rolling yet cool image—don't automatically seem new or fresh. (For a movie musical that really broke ground—in both style and content—you only have to look back 15 or 20 years to *A Hard Day's Night* and *Performance*.)

Almost all the innovations in *Purple Rain* are stylistic—the way the story is told, the way the editing and the camerawork and the performances keep jumping you up or stringing you out. This lack of story innovation may even be a factor in the movie's sudden, immense popularity.

Boy Meets Girl, Boy Loses Girl, Boy Gets Girl; the Shining-Eyed Stage Hopeful and the Lustful Producer; The Slipping Star and the Performance That Will Make or Break Him; How Talent Triumphs over Personal Tragedy—even Abbott & Costello's "Who's on First?" routine—they're all in *Purple Rain*.

But even though it blatantly mixes up the plots of a '30s-'40s backstage musical and a '50s-'60s teenage psycho-drama, most audiences still feel *Purple Rain* as something different, something new—as an "MTV musical," that same loose genre that includes *Flashdance* and *Footloose*.

Perhaps some critics became overly incensed at the idea of "MTV musicals" because they felt all this visual flash, cinematic smoke and mirrors, was somehow clouding the minds of the audience, hoodwinking them into liking bad movies. But, if anything, the boom in rock videos will help the movies, because it creates another proving ground for technicians and directors. (The only things that might help the current run of lousy scripts are forced crash courses in literacy, dramatic construction, social history, current events and audience psychology for all the execs who are picking them.) And anyway, MTV videos aren't really a stylistic entity

unto themselves; virtually every technique *they* use (electronic distortions aside) is somehow derivative of "mainstream movies"—or, at times, avant-garde shorts. Most of the videos I see—at least the good ones—are still copying Dick Lester's song sequences in the Beatles movies, or the "Memo from Turner" number in *Performance*.

Purple Rain is there to prove that the style—telling a story in rapid, visually jazzy bursts all keyed to the music score—doesn't have to make for a disjointed, shallow movie—especially if the same person (in this case, writer/director Albert Magnoli) worked on both the script and direction.

In the movie, Magnoli makes the musical numbers into sort of aural-video-dramatic nexus points. They're the release for all the emotional and psychic conflicts that keep building up between them. Besides, since *Purple Rain* establishes itself right away as a rock 'n' roll fairy tale, done in a grandiose, elevated, slightly kitschy style, the dramatic scenes, shallow as some of them are, fit in better. Even the rapid-fire editing and jagged bursts of action fit in the nonmusical sections—perhaps because the audience can accept them as part of The Kid's or Apollonia's souped up, feverishly racing consciousness. And though some of the dialogue (and a performance or two) grates on you, some of it is good—and some of the acting has real power and authority. The fact that the movie tries to communicate through visuals rather than words shouldn't be held against it. It's all compressed and a bit glib, of



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course—in true MTV fashion—but it works here because *Purple Rain* has become genuinely a *musical film*, rather than just a film with music.

But in *Purple Rain*, just as in any first-rank Hollywood musical, what ultimately counts is not so much the music, but what the filmmakers (the director, the choreographers and performers) manage to do with it. If you play the soundtracks of *Swing Time* or *Top Hat* or *Singin' in the Rain*, you not only won't get the same charge you got while watching the movies—you may find that the only real pleasure the record can give you is by goading your memory into recalling the movie. Playing the *Purple Rain* album, you don't get anything approaching the sizzle and kick of the movie. There the songs *mean* more; they're not only excitingly staged (for both Prince and Morris Day, choreography is every bit as important as singing), but each of them is placed as another stage in the story, another stanza in the kid's love affair, his personal quest—or another round in his battle with Morris. The stage, it's suggested here, is where The Kid works out his tensions, exposes himself, reveals what either society or his family represses in him—it's the only arena where he can be fully alive.

Onstage, Prince's face is blank and his body a writhing lewd knot of sexual heat; offstage he acts shy and boyish and playful, even a little awkward. Onstage, emotions pour out of him; offstage, he holds them in, and they begin to consume and destroy. At one point, in fact, in a near-orgy of self-abasement (Apollonia has just walked into his club with an ineffably smug Morris), Prince actually begins to fuck the stage, rotating his hips only inches from the floor as he howls out an almost vilely misogynistic song about a one-night stand with a whore. Misogyny and violence toward women—and its terrifying consequences—are two of the film's leading leitmotifs, and, finally, at the end, Magnolia manages to suggest that Prince is *purging* himself of all this by singing "Purple Rain"—a tune written by the Revolution's two female members, Wendy and Lisa, a tune that he had previously dismissed without listening. Moments later, The Kid crowns this

Onstage, Prince's face is blank and his body a writhing lewd knot of sexual heat; offstage he acts shy and boyish...

gesture by singing *another* song that echoes his father's sentiments ("I Would Die for You"), and the circle of acceptance and forgiveness is complete. (That song's lyrics—"I'm not a woman/I'm not a man/I am something that you'll never understand"—also imply a union of male and female elements in Prince's consciousness, and that's a catharsis of another kind.)

There's another major difference between *Purple Rain* and the other "MTV musicals." It matters a lot that Prince and Morris Day are actual musical performers—where Jennifer Beals and Kevin Bacon were actors (good ones) being subbed for by faceless dancers. That's something of a cheat; and it makes *Flashdance* and *Footloose*, however entertaining, almost the modern-day equivalents of *West Side Story*, *The King and I* and every other elephantine Hollywood musical where someone like Marni Nixon stood offstage and sang for the star.

It's Prince—and Morris Day and to a lesser extent, Apollonia—who elevate *Purple Rain* high above *Flashdance* or *Footloose*, and above most of the rock-video phenomenon and ambience that spawned them all. Prince, like Mick Jagger

before him (and off there on the slant, the even more ambiguous Michael Jackson) has a polymorphous perverse appeal. His whole image keeps you off balance and, like Jackson or the younger Elvis Presley, he gives an impression of being far less naughty offstage than on. The sex we see here—the rolling silk-swathed hips, orgasmic screams, thrusting pelvis and a long moment of simulated fellatio with his guitarist Wendy—all seems playful, staged, some kind of put-on.

Similarly, Morris Day—who comes very close to stealing the whole movie and making himself, in the process, a kind of sub-Richard Pryor—is a playful villain, playfully macho. His vulgarities and attempts at pimp-cool are often disrupted by goony, falsetto screeches that give the game away, and Day's jivey little routines with his majordomo-crony Jerome Benton are always burlesqued, never really *deeply* nasty. (There's one single exception, and a moment that doesn't work particularly well: the scene where Jerome heaves Morris' ex-girlfriend into the dumpster.) When Morris' moment of maximum villainy arrives—bopping down the hallway, he pokes his head through The Kid's doorway, one eye arched, and says, with *full knowledge* of the father's recent suicide attempt, "How's the family?"—Magnoli can't leave him so ravagingly self-condemned. Seconds later we see Morris again, alone in the hallway, gulping, apparently not able to believe *himself* that he's done such a thing. And at The Kid's climactic set—in a shot that, for me, was the movie's real epiphany—Morris is swinging and jumping and cheering along with everyone else: cheering on the Revolution.

Prince's sexuality isn't any less intense simply because it's so playfully ambiguous and slightly mocked up. The exaggerations and stylizations, in fact, may be the prime ingredient of his stage sexiness. Like Tina Turner or even Elvis, he makes you smile at the hokiness of it all. He can be so extreme and abandoned, and get away with such effete narcissism and such wild simulations of sexual ecstasy and orgasm, precisely because there's a level at which you can't take him seriously, where you know that he's sharing some deep, private joke with his audience. The

film's big love scene doesn't even *look* much like a love scene: Apollonia, kneeling on a bed with Prince behind her, fondles and masturbates herself with long languorous strokes, and when Prince doubles up the fondling behind her, caressing her breasts and vagina, he looks a little less like a lover than some extension of her psyche, two more hands suddenly grown from her writhing body.

This scene hints at the major flaw in *Purple Rain*: the fact that the love scenes suggest masturbation and wet dreams more than they do actual love, an actual passionate exchange between a man and a woman. And it hurts the movie—especially a movie whose whole theme is partly an attack on macho attitudes toward women—that the main female character is so undeveloped, that Apollonia Kotero is so much less forceful and compelling a performer than either Prince or Morris. (Reportedly she was a last-minute substitute for Vanity of Vanity 6, another Prince-produced act, whose leader, a dead ringer for Apollonia, defected at the last minute to work with Martin Scorsese.)

But the scene—weird masturbatory overtones and all—is also part of the play-sexual ambiance ("I'm not a woman/I'm not a man..."). In *Purple Rain*, even though the actors are using their real names, it becomes obvious that the characters they play are not projections of themselves and their private lives, but of their stage personas. So the drama doesn't just feed into the acts; the acts, in a way, procreate the drama in the first place. Those characters are all built out of the stage acts and 20 or 30 years of pop music and movie dreams and idols.

Maybe *Purple Rain*, when the music's over, is really *Rebel Without a Cause Singin' in the Rain on 42nd Street* (or the *7th Street Entry* in Minneapolis), a wild pop stew, boiling with contradictory images, just like MTV itself. But *whatever* it is, *Purple Rain* proves conclusively that MTV can't kill the movies. And that rock 'n' roll will never die. And that Minneapolis—at least from *one* angle of vision—has all the pain, the midnight ramblings, lubricious sex and desire, and hot pulsing beauty you could want from any halfway decent American City of the Night. □



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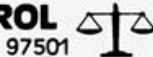
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Barcelona

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The village square might remind one of a dusty small town in Texas. Twenty teenagers in front of the local cafe all wearing sunglasses, jeans and shiny black leather boots; Led Zeppelin blasts out from tinny outdoor speakers. The main difference is Spain's new law about the consumption of cannabis. Everyone is openly smoking joints. The local dealer is wearing a marijuana leaf button, with "Mom" written underneath.

"Why don't you grow it yourself?" I ask one of the lads. "Spain has a perfect climate." When I get to the part where I tell them you have to destroy the male plant to increase the potency, their sense of machoism is offended. They will hear no more.

Back at Elaine's flat I see she has prepared a feast of earthly pleasures—champagne, chicken, and Lola, a 21-year-old jazz pianist with dark, deep Carthaginian eyes and an alert busy smile. Lola is a friend of Elaine's; we had met in Zeleste a few days ago. Although neither one of us speaks a word of the other's language, I guess Elaine had noticed there are glances that are like collisions, and arranged this match. Among her many virtues, Elaine is not jealous, and generously shares with her lovers.

The evening is not a disappointment, either. Not only am I flattered to be making love with a woman half my age, young enough to be my daughter, but she has her period. The universe is not merely infinite, it is infinitely reflexive: anything a person is able to imagine they are able to find evidence to support.

In a recently published book of verse, *Die Kunst des Flirtens*, I had written: "You arrived unexpectedly/My moustache smelled of someone else's menstrual blood." And in another poem: "I guess licking menstrual blood is my lot for the Eighties." And now I'm pleased to taste the sweet Latin blood from Lola's labial lips; the pale red fluid a pleasant color contrast to her black curly hair.

Getting dressed in the morning I am jolted into thought by a cold tile floor.

Reading through a news magazine on the 24-hour bus ride down, I came across an item about a prime minister, who, upon hearing his minister of justice was hiding wanted "terrorists" in

his own home, exclaimed: "grotesque, unbelievable, bizarre, unprecedented" and thus, through an acronym, the word "gubu" was born, as in gubu events. I didn't know it then, but this word was to become the paradigm of my experience in Barcelona; it's gubu!

Between the death of Franco (1975) and when the Spanish almost inevitably will make the mistake of joining the Common Market and NATO (about two or three more years), I maintain this time will be known as a Golden Age of Spain, a message of hope in the bloody 20th century.

I like a woman who likes herself enough to taste her own menstrual blood. Before I leave, I bend down and softly kiss Lola while her body pulses rhythmically under the thin covers, as if she is asleep. I take a chance.

"Adios," I say.

Without opening her eyes, she replies, "Adios." □

Grateful acknowledgement for a free ticket is made to Magic Bus (Rokin 38, Amsterdam—tel: 264434), a great alternative travel service with offices also in Paris, London, Athens and Copenhagen.

It has been many years since I last took a coach trip through the Continent. Memory holds open the door of a three-day journey from Amsterdam to Athens in an old bus with hard seats, about two inches' leg room, wall-to-wall rucksacks, bread and cheese, and canteens, day and night the Pink Floyd cracked-through speakers muted by scrap pieces of cardboard, the toupe of an aging queen sitting in front of me kept falling into my lap, and we were shaken down for drugs by customs at each and every border. Those were the not so good old days.

Now the bus was new. It was comfortable, with reclining seats. Its 44-seat capacity only half filled so everyone had an opportunity to stretch out. No sleazos. A video on board; I watched *The Sting* and *The Champ*. Also a bar serving beer and soft drinks. And every four hours a pit stop for food. While French roadside restaurants are not haute cuisine, they are a damned sight better than their American counterparts. Even if you're finicky about food, you can still get a drinkable wine and a decent pate and crusty bread. No border hassles. Upon crossing into Spain at four in the morning the driver announced: "Okay, smugglers, you are safe now." The senior citizens across the aisle giggled. □

Tokyo

/ continued from page 49

the streets instead. After a few years the Takenoko-zoku was joined by the Graffiti-zoku, kids who based their style and musical tastes on the film *American Graffiti*. For the Graffiti-zoku the place to shop was the Harajuku rockabilly shop, Cream Soda, a boutique whose motto is "Too fast to live, too young to die."

Since the street dancing began in Harajuku, boutiques featuring young designers have multiplied by the hundreds. Fashion designing is viewed in much the same way as music is—an attractive, romantic and potentially rewarding alternative to a nine to five office job.

Of course Japanese youth these days are concerned with more than just fashion and music. While their elders decry the passivity of the "catalog generation" (so named because of their fondness for product-oriented magazines like *Popeye*, *Bru-tus*, *Olive* and *Mono*), Japanese kids are struggling to establish their own identity.

"When I was a teenager things were different," says Yasuhiro Hamano, one of the leaders of the "Simple Movement" which helped foster the growth of hippie-style ethics in the '60s. "We were analog and the kids today are digital. They understand the limits of their lives so they are very interested in real things. We were romantics."

Analog or digital, romantic or realist, there's no final definition that can adequately describe the energy and ethics of today's younger generation in Japan. The social restrictions of the past are slowly giving way to a more relaxed attitude toward the desires of the individual. The Japanese, after years of concentrating primarily on building a strong industrial base, are at last beginning to develop a modern lifestyle outside of the office.

While Japanese engineers are leading the world in high-tech industries like ceramics and robotics, a new wave of young people are developing their own fields of interest. Fashion and music are just two of the more accessible windows to the West. As the millennium approaches, the new Japanese culture—an appealing hybrid of East and West—will surely provide more. □

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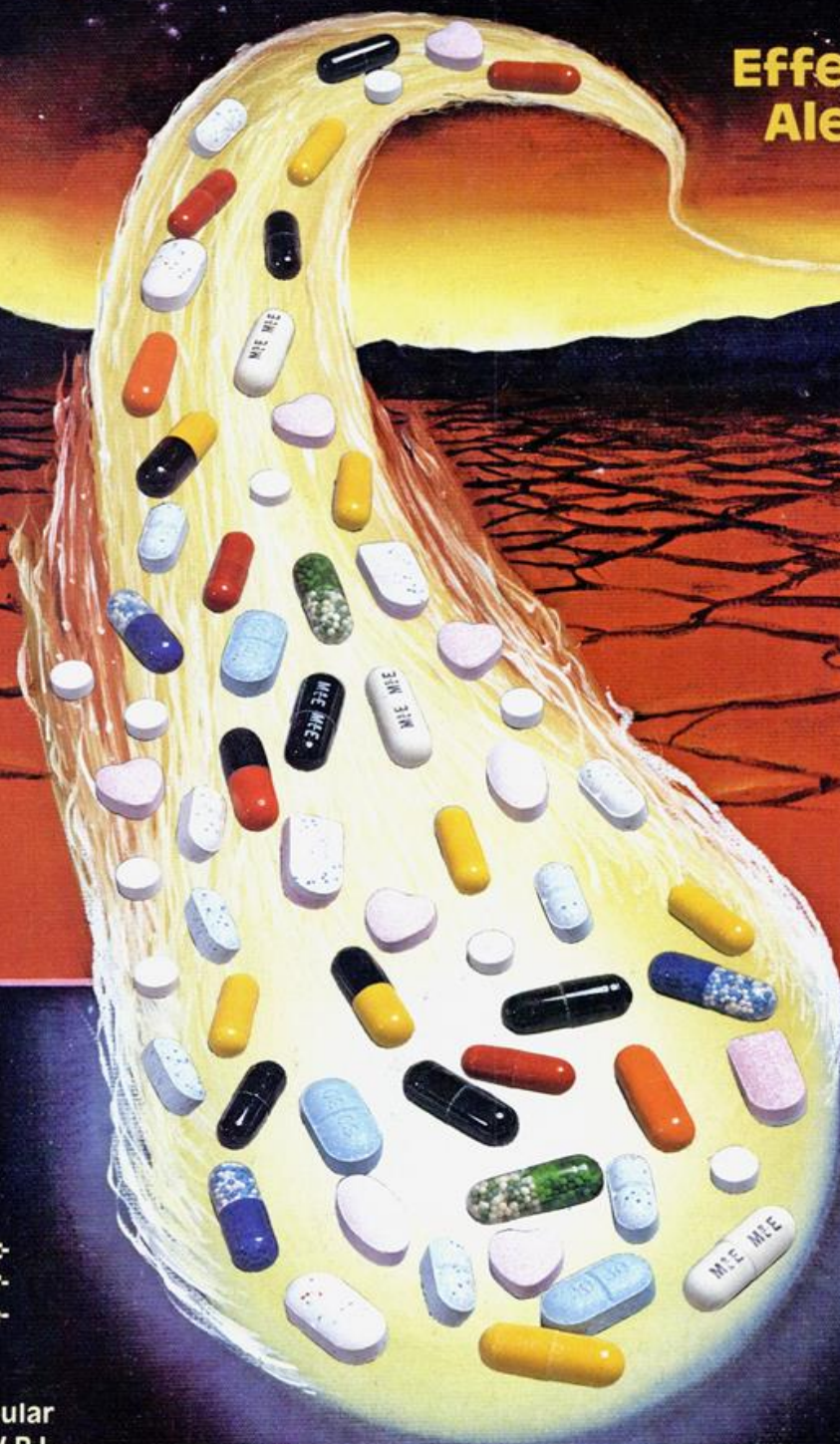
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